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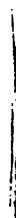
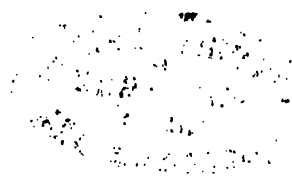
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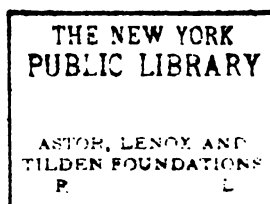
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FRESHMAN







“ ‘Start again,’ commanded Willy.”

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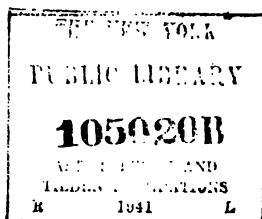
BUTT CHANLER FRESHMAN

BY

JAMES SHELLEY HAMILTON



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TO
BOB AND LEON

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BUTT CHANLER, FRESHMAN

CHAPTER I

'VANTAGE IN

ROUGH or smooth?"

"Oh—er—rough!"

Butt flung his racket into the air with a sharp twirl.

"Rough it is. Which court?"

Timothy magnanimously chose the court that was least in the shade and vaulted over the net with all the athletic grace at his command. Butt suspected that the presence of a seatful of girls on the side line was the reason he was given the advantage of courts—it was certainly the reason Timothy took the trouble of jumping over the net instead of walking around. Timothy, however, was serenely unconscious that Butt harbored any such ungenerous suspicions. He was feeling in a particularly generous mood himself. He had made up his mind to give the kid all the show he could, considering that the

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kid's sister was there and would naturally want her brother to put up a good game. Of course Butt had no chance of winning.

Butt—real name Robert, thus shortened to fit his size—did not think especially about the girls, except that their being there was giving Timothy a beautiful chance to show off. If they had to be around at all they were much better on the side lines, out of the way. He let Timothy do all the smiling at them and took his position at the back line.

"Ready?" Timothy was quite ready, as his easy, almost dead-sure manner plainly indicated. He felt that it was really rather of a shame to put it all over this kid just out of high school, with so many girls looking on. Timothy had been a year in college.

Butt served his first ball. It was meant to be a baffling serve, but it turned out badly and struck somewhere back of his opponent's serving line. The second ball, managed more cautiously, was a little too cautious and landed in the net. Timothy couldn't keep back a good-natured but tolerant smile.

"Love—fifteen!" called Butt, shifting to the other side of the court. His face was flushed with vexation, and Timothy thought again that it really was a shame.

Again the baffling first serve failed to meet expectations, but the second turned out better. Tim-

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hy sent the ball back easily. Butt tried a lob, and gain lost his point.

"Too bad!" said one of the audience sympathetically. Timothy felt that he could agree with er, but after all it wasn't his fault. He would give ie youngster all the chances he could, but he was ot to blame if the youngster failed to profit by them.

Butt wished the girls would shut up. He didn't ant any of their commiseration, and it seemed natural enough to him that a court he had never played n before should give the other fellow some advantage at first. "Love—thirty!" he called.

This time the first serve was good, but Timothy as right on hand and refused to be baffled. His uick return won him another point. Butt braced p and won the next two points, but the game went o Timothy.

Butt took his position to receive. Those ever-isting girls were at it again, commiserating. Girls' ympathy always grated on Butt, because he could ever help feeling that it was all on account of his ize. What if he did look little beside Timothy's an six feet? That had nothing to do with tennis laying, beyond giving the taller fellow a longer each.

"The games are one—love," said Timothy, toe-ig the serving line. "Are you ready?"

Butt merely nodded. His attention was fixed on

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the ball. He lammed it back for all he was worth, and Timothy failed to get it.

"Oh, good!" cried the girls with a little flutter of applause. In his satisfaction at having made a good play Butt forgot all about them. He was getting used to the court now, and Timothy began to realize that the "kid" might know a little tennis after all. But at the beginning of the next game Butt had to announce the score as "Love—two."

Then he gritted his teeth and settled down to play for all there was in him. The realization slowly came over Timothy that long legs were not necessarily able to get over the ground any faster than short ones. As the game warmed up he found his opponent covering the court with surprising agility. Timothy had such hard work to make the set his by a score of 9 to 7 that he forgot all about there being a seatful of girls on the side line. Butt was showing him that if he cared for his laurels at all he mustn't give the youngster any more chances than he could possibly help.

At the beginning of the second set several small boys added themselves to the audience. Timothy knew these particular boys of old, and he glanced at them a bit apprehensively as they squatted in a little group near one end of the net. Butt was plainly their favorite, and they immediately set about helping him by keeping up a running fire of remarks

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among themselves about Timothy's form. They couldn't have found a more successful scheme, for Timothy took great pride in the form of his tennis playing. As a matter of fact there was not such a great deal of fault to be found with it, but besides being proud of his skill Timothy was extremely sensitive to criticism, without the good sense to see that these juvenile remarks, pitched just loud enough for him to hear every word, were made purely and simply to bother him. As a result he got rattled, which is fatal in tennis playing, and Butt won the next set by a score of 6 to 3.

Timothy noted the victor's happy smile grimly. It did not please him at all that he had not triumphantly won two sets in succession, as he had confidently hoped to do, and his failure awakened the memory of a former rivalry that was not pleasant for him to think of. It was two years now since he had seen anything of Butt except on flying visits home. They had been in high school together then, boys of the same age and size, and both in for the same things. Butt, however, had been just a little the brighter in his lessons, just a little more successful in the school games, just a little more popular among the other boys—things that Timothy could not endure gracefully; and when Butt ended by walking off with a special prize on which he had set his heart, Timothy persuaded his father to let him go

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away to a private school the next year, where he did extra work and got himself ready to enter college a year sooner than he ordinarily would have done. The two years away from home, one of them in college, had pretty well effaced his old-time jealousy, and he was back at Millton now ready to meet Butt on an entirely new footing of friendliness, feeling, perhaps, that having gained a year on the stay-at-home, he could afford to. But here was the same old feeling cropping up again in spite of himself.

"We can't do anything with those kids keeping up such an infernal yap all the time," he complained crossly as he stood mopping his face preparatory to entering upon the third round of the contest. Butt had been so engrossed in the game that he hadn't noticed the boys at all, but he promptly walked over to his little band of "rooters" and put a quietus upon their enthusiasm. Timothy steadied down after that, but his earlier prowess was gone. Butt came out the victor, 7 to 5. The girls clapped their hands daintily as he won the deciding point, and the boys, who had been watching with only a subdued whispering among themselves, let out a whoop of triumph as Timothy missed the last serve, and scampered around the corner of the house.

Butt shook hands with his vanquished rival and hurried away for a cold shower. Timothy accepted defeat as gracefully as he could, and sat down on

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the ground beside the girls to explain elaborately just how he had come to be beaten.

As he sat there the crowning ignominy of the afternoon overtook him. The tennis court ran alongside the club house, and the settee from which the girls had watched the game stood right up against its wall. Timothy, lounging on the ground near the end of the settee, was just in the midst of an exposition of the peculiar difficulties of playing one's best game on this particular court, when a pitcherful of icy water descended from an upper window and struck him squarely in his upturned face. The perpetrators of the deed smothered their giggles, waited only long enough to be sure they had hit their mark, and then made their escape. In five minutes they were far across the golf links.

Timothy arose, drenched but dignified. The worst part was that the girls were there to see it—that hurt more than anything else.

"It's a good thing for Robert that he's going to college this fall," he said frigidly, after a moment's pause in which to find fitting words to express his somewhat mixed emotions. "It will cure him of kid tricks like this. There are lots of things that freshman year will teach our Robert"—and his way of saying the words was meant to hint at unthinkable punishments that lay in wait for Butt when he should be delivered into the power of Timothy Doughton,

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Sophomore. Having thus relieved his feelings the discomfited one marched stiffly around the corner of the house, followed by a subdued tittering from the girls. It did not occur to him to suspect any one but Butt of this indignity.

Later, Butt and Timothy met on the front piazza. Timothy, clad in dry clothes, was disposed to ignore the pitcher-of-water incident. His parting remarks to the girls about Butt and college had started him on a train of thought that suggested many pleasant things to him during the half hour spent in changing his clothes—thoughts that had completely driven away his anger. In the course of that half-hour's meditation he had evolved a little plan that promised to bring him a neat bit of revenge—nothing terribly elaborate, but bidding fair to prove humiliating to Butt and quite satisfying to himself. So his manner was distinctly friendly.

"That was a very decent game of tennis you put up this afternoon," he began, planning thus to smooth the way by destroying any suspicion Butt might have that he was cherishing a grudge on account of the afternoon's events.

Butt had no such suspicions, but the bit of praise was very pleasant for the reason that he had learned never to expect that sort of thing from Timothy. He decided inwardly that college was making a pretty good fellow of Timothy after all.

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"It wasn't any cinch winning those two sets," he said, not to let Timothy outdo him in generosity.

"I guess it might have turned out different if those kids had behaved themselves. You see, I never noticed what they were doing till you spoke about it."

"You'll have to go into the tournament," Timothy went on, ignoring the possibilities of what might have happened if he had not got rattled.

"You know they have a tennis tournament between the sophomores and freshmen every fall. We may run up against each other in that, and if we do you want to look out," he finished, laughing jovially at his own threat. "When are you going down to Tresham, anyway?" he asked, feeling that he could venture on with the laying of his net.

"Some time the first of the week, I suppose. I hate to settle down to plugging again, and I'm going to stay up here as long as I can."

"Well, it doesn't make such a lot of difference with you. I'll have to get there early, of course—there's an awful raft of things to get done before the crowd begins to pile in; but a freshman doesn't really need to get there much before the day college opens."

Butt had seated himself on the piazza railing, from where he could watch a golf match that was just nearing its finish on the green just up the hill. There was silence for a little time, during which

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Timothy thought out his little scheme again, and smiled.

"You've never been to Tresham, have you?" he asked presently.

"No." All Butt's attention was on the golf match for the moment. "O Lord, what a dub! Anybody ought to know enough not to use a cleek on a close drive like that!"

Timothy waited until the match was finished before he went on. When he was sure of uninterrupted attention he returned to the charge:

"Of course you have heard something about the things they do at college—hazing and that sort of thing?"

Butt smiled. He had heard something about hazing, and the thought of Timothy's trying it on him called up a vision that filled him with amusement.

"I suppose every college has its own way of doing things," Tim continued, "and in most places they have gone on in the same way for so long that they've got to be a sort of tradition. It's that way at Tresham, anyhow."

Butt saw that Timothy was started on one of his "Listen-my-children" talks, so he settled himself comfortably in a big chair where he could look off over the hills and listen or not, as he felt inclined, without interrupting. The afternoon's exercise had

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left him with a cozy, lazy feeling that a whole piazzaful of talking Timothies could not have spoiled.

"There's the freshman picture, for instance," the talker went on. "You have a certain time to get that taken in—a week, I think it is—and it must be taken in a certain place and have a certain percentage of the class in it. There's your class supper, too; that can come any time between the end of football season and Washington's birthday, and your class president and a certain number of your class have to be present and eat through the whole menu, or it doesn't count. If you win some victory over the sophomores, you can paint your class numerals around—if you can manage to do it without getting caught. If we catch you, we can make you rub them out. Oh, there are all sorts of customs. Then there's the hazing. That's a tradition, too, and, of course, the freshmen have to put up with it. I tell you, the quickest way a fellow can queer himself is by trying to buck up against traditions."

Timothy paused to give the weight of his last remark its full value. Butt was listening attentively, but saw no occasion to interrupt. When he judged the pause sufficiently long, Timothy continued:

"Of course nobody does try to buck up against them if he knows about things—sometimes a freshman comes along and does something a bit out of

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the way, but that's all. I thought it would make it easier for you if you knew something about how things are run beforehand."

Again he paused, but again, still content with being a silent pupil, Butt let the opportunity for a remark or question slip by.

"But there's one thing," went on Timothy, "that the sophomores have got into the habit of doing that freshmen aren't obliged to put up with a bit if they only knew it. Mighty few of them do know it, though, or they could have the laugh on the sophs every time. The sophs, you know, go down to the trains—not many of them, but just enough—to give the new men a welcome when they strike town. They nab 'em as they get off the train and make 'em run the gantlet right then and there. Of course the freshmen are taken by surprise—they don't usually expect things to begin happening straight out of the box like that. They aren't really expected to put up with any hazing till college is actually open, but they don't generally know that, so they do whatever's told 'em without a question. Now I'll tell you what to do. Of course they'll expect you to walk innocently right into their hands. Now, the minute you get off the train you cut and run. They won't be expecting that and you'll have a good start before they even see what's up. It isn't likely they'll chase you—that would be too undig-

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nified, and if you give 'em the slip the whole college will be giving them the laugh. If they *should* get you—well, *defy* them. They haven't any right to haze till college opens, and when they see you know what's what they'll let you alone."

Long experience in Timothy's ways had taught Butt to beware of him when he was in this friendly mood. Time and again had Timothy proved to be in the class of those Greeks who came to the Trojans bearing gifts. Just now, however, Butt was at peace with all the world and disposed to take Timothy's kindness for just what it appeared to be. He had not yet heard about the ducking episode.

"Thank you, Tim," he said heartily. "It's mighty decent of you to tell me this, and I'm certainly obliged to you."

"Oh, that's all right," and Timothy smiled deprecatingly. "Of course it looks a bit funny, giving away my own classmates like this, but your being an old friend and from the same town—well, it sort of makes it different."

So Butt accepted his kindly advice with proper gratefulness. Timothy wasn't such a bad sort after all. And Timothy's smile grew broader and he chuckled quietly to himself. He had laid his snare with entire success, so far as he could see, and without having had to tell what he would have called an actual untruth.

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"So you expect to go down to Tresham about Tuesday?" he asked, as if as an afterthought.

"Yes, Tuesday—probably on the early train. I suppose there'll be a good deal of settling to do."

Timothy promised himself to be at that early train on Tuesday morning.

CHAPTER II

BUTT ARRIVES

WHEN the train began to slow up as it neared the station Butt was already standing by the door, his suit case and mandolin case in hand. There was no need of the conductor's call to tell him this was the place. He had looked it up on the time-table too often for that.

It was an early train and there seemed to be no other students on it—certainly not in his car. He hoped it was so early that there wouldn't be many sophomores down to meet it. Timothy's friendly "tip" had been taking a pretty prominent place in his thoughts coming down in the train, and this cutting and running business did not appeal to him very much; it was too much like running away—and whether he got away or not, he was likely to cut a ridiculous figure. He preferred that there should be as few witnesses to it as possible. He had too much respect for what Timothy had called the "traditions of the place" to think of not doing as he had been told to do. But as they pulled in at the station he could see a crowd of fellows on the platform, wait-

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ing. He sighed and gripped his luggage firmly, ready to run the second his feet touched the ground.

Luckily he was in the end car and the sophomores were clustered together farther up the platform. He jumped before the train had quite reached a standstill, and started running down the track in the direction of what looked like a freight house. Once behind that he might find some way of eluding them. Then they caught sight of him.

"Hey! Where you going?" some one shouted. They all yelled at him, but he kept on without looking back. Then, jumping over a rain gulley that ran under the track, he stumbled and, trying to save his precious new mandolin case from getting scratched, fell. That put an end to any idea of flight. He picked himself up and took his stand, baggage in front of him, ready to defy them with what dignity he could command.

They came up to him, laughing, and clustered about him.

"What are you running away from?" one of them asked, smiling broadly.

Butt stood up very straight and glared at them, his hands clenched at his sides, which made them laugh more, for he had the look of an angry bantam rooster ready for a fight. "I know what this is. You haven't any right to haze till college opens," he blurted out.

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They greeted his defiance with a yell of laughter. Then one of them recovered enough to speak. "Who's hazing? You're in wrong, little feller. This isn't hazing."

Butt looked over the circle of laughing faces. Suspicion awoke, and as he stood there, feeling very sheepish, Timothy's little scheme dawned slowly upon him. He got very red and stooped to pick up his belongings. "I guess I made a mistake," he said shortly. "I beg your pardon."

"Oh, that's all right!" three or four of them assured him at once. He had an humiliating feeling that he had acted like a green kid, but the wholly good-natured way in which they took it was distinctly comforting. Their mirth was entirely friendly, and his resentment all turned toward Timothy. He made up his mind that the settling of this score should be among the very first of his college duties.

But the sophomores—were they sophomores, after all?—kept close behind him, and he saw that they had some kind of cards in their hands.

"What time can I meet you?" one of them asked, and that seemed to be a sort of signal, for they began to push closer, jostling one another to get to him. "Eight o'clock! Give me eight!" "Eight-thirty!" "I've got eight-thirty!" "Nine, then!" "Ten!" they kept shouting. Butt looked around in astonishment, but they seemed to be fight-

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ing it out among themselves without paying any attention to him at all. After a time they apparently came to some sort of agreement, comparing cards together and writing something on them. Then one by one the cards were thrust into his hands and the men began to go away. Butt stood looking at them with a puzzled look on his face.

"I say—" he began; then one of them had pity on his bewilderment, and taking the cards from him started sorting them out.

"What are they?" asked Butt.

"Appointments. I forgot there were people in the world who didn't know all about how we do things here. Going up street?" Butt thought he might as well go up street as anywhere, so he said "Yes."

"I'll go along with you," and the other picked up Butt's suit case. "Oh, that's all right," he said as Butt started to protest, and they turned up the walk that led from the station. "You see, every fraternity sends a couple men to meet every freshman that comes to town, and they make appointments with him. That's one way we get a line on the new men. These cards tell you who you've got an appointment with and what time and where they'll meet you. For instance"—he set the suit case down and looked through the cards. "Here's mine—Kappa Chi. We meet you at seven o'clock

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at the hotel. See? You go around and look 'em all over, and they look you over, and when you've both made up your minds—well, you do what you've made up your minds to do, if your minds agree. We call the whole thing 'rushing.' ”

Butt looked at the cards with a new interest. He had known, without giving the matter any particular thought, that there were fraternities at Tresham, but Timothy, in his frequent dissertations on college life, had said very little about them and nothing at all about “rushing”—perhaps because he had been afraid of spoiling his little scheme for Butt's entry into town. The card Butt's companion had singled out was very like a calling card, with “Kappa Chi” engraved on it instead of a name. In one of the corners was written “7 P.M. at Hotel,” and down at the bottom “appointment made by Mr. Donnel.”

“Are you Mr. Donnel?” asked Butt.

“Yes.” Donnel held out his hand with a cordial smile. “We're introduced now. There usually isn't time for introductions at trains. That all comes later, you know. You'll probably meet about three quarters of the men in college before the night's over, and you'll be lucky if you can keep half a dozen of them straight in your mind. It's all pretty mixed up at first, but you get things straightened out after a while and begin to see where you're really at.” As he talked Donnel had been arranging the cards.

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"Now they are in right order," he said, handing them to Butt, "so you can see just which comes after which without going through the whole bunch." He picked up the suit case and they started on again.

"Ever been here before?" Donnel asked; then he laughed. "About everyone you meet will start by asking you that," he added.

Butt said it was his first time in the town.

"You'll like it—everybody does. There's one of the fraternity houses down there on the left. You'll go there to-night. There's the chapel tower over the top of those trees," and as they walked up the street Donnel pointed out all the college buildings that were in sight. Butt did not have to say much except to answer an occasional question. He thought Donnel was mighty kind to take so much trouble for him, and wondered what class he was in. He had so far lost faith in everything Timothy had told him that he doubted if there had been any sophomores at the train at all. At any rate, Donnel did not seem like a sophomore.

"There's the hotel," said Donnel as they turned into the main street. "I suppose you're going there first?"

"I guess I might as well, till I find a room. I'll leave my things there, anyway."

"Going to room in the Dorms?"

"Yes, if they aren't all full."

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"I don't know. There's a pretty big class this year and a lot of 'em engaged rooms last spring. But you'd better try it. It's a lot better to room in the Dorms the first year, anyway, then you get in with the other men in your own class from the very first."

They found a crowd in the hotel office, but no one to look after newcomers. Donnel rushed about, and finally got hold of a clerk.

"We want to leave these things here a while—I'll just drop 'em here behind the counter. All right? All right." He turned back to Butt. "Perhaps you'd better go up and see about your room right away. If you're going up now I'll walk along with you. I've got an appointment at Langton at half-past."

"Oh, I don't want to bother you any more," protested Butt.

"Got to go, anyway, so you won't be doing any bothering," so they started out again, across the common and up the hill to a big stone building in the middle of the campus. "This is Langton Hall—there's my man waiting for me. That's the registrar's office in there. You'd better go in and register and see that everything's all right. The treasurer's office is just across the hall. That's where to see about your room. Glad to have met you—see you again to-night," and with a quick handshake

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he was off before Butt could even begin to utter the thanks on the tip of his tongue.

After a little delay Butt managed to present his certificate and get himself enrolled as a member of the freshman class of Tresham College. Then he went to the treasurer. Every room in the dormitories was taken, he found, but there were some, big enough for two people, for which only one man had applied, and if Butt could arrange to room with one of these applicants it would be all right. A student who was assisting in the treasurer's office offered to go around with him and see about it. So they started for the brick dormitories on the crest of the hill.

"There are only two dorms, you know," explained Butt's companion. "Most of the fellows move into the fraternity houses after freshman year. That's South the other side of the chapel, and this is North. Let's see"—they stopped in the entry of North College and he took out his little chart of rooms. "Here's Number 32 with only one man in it. We'll look at that," and they climbed the stairs to the third floor.

The door of 32 was closed. As they knocked, Butt read the brand-new card tacked on the panel—"Wilbur Durham, 2d."

"Come in," a voice called from within. They opened the door and found a fat, chunkéd fellow seated in the midst of a chaos of unpacking.

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"Mr. Durham?" asked Butt's guide, stepping across the threshold. "This is Mr. Chanler. He's hunting for a room and a roommate, and I thought I'd let you have a look at each other." Durham got up laboriously, wiping his broad, perspiring face with a handkerchief, and picked his way across the scattered boxes and baggage, hand outstretched. His bulk loomed enormously now that he was standing, so that he seemed to be crowding everything else out of the room.

"Glad to see you," he said, gripping Butt's hand in a clasp that almost made him wince. "I've got my room, but no roommate, and I really need some one to help me sort out this rubbish."

"Here's the chart," said the treasurer's assistant. "The rooms are marked, so you'll be able to find them all right. Look them over, and if you make up your mind to go into one of them, come down and we'll fix up the contract. I'll have to be getting back to the office," and he hastened out of the room with a brief "Not at all" to Butt's hurried expression of thanks.

"I never saw people keep doing things for a fellow the way they do here," said Butt as the door closed. "And they always run off before you have a chance to thank them. I don't see how they have time to take so much trouble."

"Oh, it's all in the game!" remarked Durham

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cheerfully. "Here, sit down." He cleared a place for Butt on the window seat. "Been around much yet?" he asked when he had squatted down on a low box.

"No, I just got in. I suppose it's pretty late to be trying to get a room, but there was so much going on at school I never thought about it last spring, and I've been up in the mountains all summer." Durham asked what mountains he had been in, and discovered it was the very place where he had been the summer before.

"Why, you must know Bill Travers, of Andover!" Butt did, which excited Durham so much that he leaned over and nearly unseated his companion with an enthusiastic slap on the back. "Golly, that's funny! Has he still got that bug about going to Yale next year? Well, we'll just get him up here and show him this place. If he can see anything else after that he isn't fit to be a friend of ours." Butt agreed, which led to further talk of Bill Travers and another Andover man they found they both knew. The conversation gradually veered around to a discussion of their own plans, until at the end of half an hour they might have been taken for friends of years' standing. Butt found something very attractive in this big, shirt-sleeved fellow, sitting there on a box and talking in his funny, good-natured voice as if they had known each other all

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their lives. Durham's face was fat, sprinkled thickly with a suggestion of freckles, and his blue eyes, cool and twinkling, helped to bear out the impression that he must be one of the cheeriest fellows in the world. Butt thought he would have to go pretty far to find a better roommate, and he made up his mind to bring the question to a point right away.

"Perhaps you'd like to think it over a little while," he said when they had steered the conversation back to the subject of rooms. "But you said you'd like some one to help you clean up, and I'd like mighty well to come in with you if we could fix it up."

"Bully!" Durham bounced heavily to his feet, all enthusiasm. "Just look around. Here's a view of the campus on this side, scenery fit for the gods from that window over there—sun in the morning, and here"—he shoved a trunk out of the way and opened a door. "Bedroom," he announced. "Plenty of space, fresh air, hot and cold water, you see."

Butt laughed. "Oh, the room's all right. The question is, do you want me in it with you?"

"Lord! Why, that's all settled! What do you think we've been talking about all this time, anyway? Of course I want you. I'd be sore as a pup if you went off and roomed with somebody else. You'd probably get hitched up with some old pill that

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would make life miserable for you. Now, Bill Travers will vouch for me. He'll tell you I never scrap—you couldn't get me into a scrap. I'd run first. Now we'll just trot down to see Mr. Treasurer and fix it up," and Durham began bustling into his coat. "Bill Travers'll be tickled silly when I write him we're going to be together," he said as they went down the stairs. "I tell you, we've got to get him up here next year. It's all foolishness, his hiking off down to Yale."

"Oh, Bill will come around all right when we both get hold of him! You know every Andover man thinks he's got to go to Yale, but— Why, hello, Tim!" They had emerged from the dormitory and ran plump into Timothy Doughton on the walk in front. Timothy had been strolling about, trying how it felt for a sophomore to revisit the scenes of his freshmanhood and incidentally hoping to impress some new man with his air of having been all through the whole business himself.

"Hello, Butt!" he exclaimed, surprised to come upon some one he knew. He had not expected Butt to get into town until the next day. It was only Monday, and Butt had distinctly said he expected to come down Tuesday morning. "When did you get in?"

"This morning. Er—there weren't many sophomores down to the train, after all."

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Timothy burst into a shout of laughter. "Did they give you a good, rousing reception?" he asked when his mirth permitted him to speak.

"Huh! That was a smart little trick of yours; I'm not going to forget it in a hurry." The sight of Timothy laughing at him fired Butt's indignation to boiling temperature.

"Oho!" Timothy drew himself up straight and looked down into Butt's angry face. The contemplation of Butt's diminutive size always gave him a feeling of physical superiority that was a continual source of gratification to him. "Do you know that is very bold language for a freshman to be using? You mustn't forget that you are only a freshman here." He stepped back a pace and stopped. "Now, then! Hats off, freshman!" he commanded, half jokingly.

Instantly Durham's hand went to his cap and removed it obediently. Butt was on the point of bursting into an angry retort, but the sight of his big roommate taking off his hat for Timothy Doughton made him burst into a laugh instead.

"Put your cap on," he said. "Why, I've known Tim Doughton ever since we were in kindergarten. Do you suppose he's going to order me around this way just because he happened to come to college a year before I did?"

Timothy's thin face got very red. Such insub-

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ordination was unbearable, especially before another freshman.

"Look here," he said sharply. "You'd just better forget about our coming from the same town. It doesn't count here. Freshness is freshness, to me just as much as to any other upper classman, and it doesn't go. Take off your hat!"

The sight of Timothy angry always had a calming effect upon Butt. He smiled now.

"Do you remember a little heart-to-heart talk you had with me about a week ago—the day one of the kids gave you a ducking? You said no sophomore had a right to do any hazing until college was really open, and if any of them tried it, you told me to defy them—*defy* them! I am defying you."

The multitude of grievances that Butt's words and manner of speaking called to Timothy's mind stirred his anger till it fairly shook him. He reached out and grabbed Butt's arm.

"If you think taking off your hat is hazing, just wait till Thursday!" he cried. "You've got a good deal to learn, but there'll be plenty to teach you when Thursday comes."

Durham, who had returned his cap to his head, laid a hand on Timothy's shoulder. "Let's forget it, then, till Thursday," he said, and pushed Timothy aside as if he were a mere child. The two freshmen continued on their way to Langton. Tim

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started to follow, but Durham's matter-of-fact air, coupled with his size, made him change his mind.

"Who is he?" asked Durham.

Butt gave a brief but comprehensive sketch of Timothy's life, accomplishments and character, finishing with an account of his little fiction about sophomores meeting trains. "Why in the world did you take off your cap to him?" he ended.

"Well, I didn't want any fuss, even with just words, and I thought it was probably the proper thing to do, anyway. What was that he called you?"

"Called me? Oh! You mean 'Butt.' That's because I'm not a six-footer."

Durham looked down at him with a grin. "It's not such a bad name, at that," he said.

CHAPTER III

GETTING SETTLED

THOSE first days at Tresham were so crowded with things to do that Butt never found a moment in which to sit down and think it all over. Even when night came and he got to bed he was always so tired that he fell right asleep, without so much as a thought of the day's events. There wasn't even much time to get acquainted with his new roommate, for Durham was continually having to be off somewhere doing one thing while he was doing another. Monday there had been a lot of stuff to get for the room, and in the evening the "rushing." At seven o'clock he had begun keeping appointments. For half an hour he would be at some fraternity house, meeting group after group of strange men, whose names he soon gave up even trying to remember. A few of them would sit down with him and ask him polite questions, presently making way for a fresh lot, who would sit down and ask the same polite questions all over again. Sometimes he was withdrawn to an inner room with three or four upper classmen. Then

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the talk would leave "How do you like Tresham?" and "What course are you going to take?" and guardedly approach the subject that the bother was really all about—the subject of fraternities. At the end of the half hour he would be whisked off to another house, to go through the same programme, until eleven o'clock came and he was allowed to escape to bed.

The next day there was more buying of furnishings, a good deal of trying to get settled, and more rushing.

Butt, being a "rushed" freshman, and consequently able to see only one side of it, thought this rushing system a most pleasant and kindly institution. As he saw more of it he liked it better and better; it did not seem to him that anything could have been devised better calculated to help a new man just entering college. It seemed to exist solely for his benefit, to show him about and give him a chance to make friends. To be sure, it did not bring him into touch with many of his own class—he wished he and Durham could have been rushed together, so they could talk it all over as they went along—but there would be a chance for all that later.

As he began to get his bearings and learned to distinguish one combination of Greek letters from another, with the different groups of men for which they stood, his first confusion disappeared, as Don-

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nel had said it would, and he found himself able to make comparisons. One fraternity, for instance, impressed him with its galaxy of athletic stars; another seemed more alive with jolly good-fellowship, without any particular men that stood out from the others by reason of prominence in college affairs; still another struck him by a more earnest, solid bearing, as if its members had begun to realize that there are serious things in the world; others, perhaps, ran to scholarship or to college offices. Each one of them had something to commend it and men who stood for something in the college, and all of them were most kind—inexplicably kind, he thought, to a fellow whom they had probably never seen or heard of before.

He could not see the machinery behind it all. He did not know that each fraternity was skilfully showing him its best points, parading its best and most prominent men before him, and keeping anything that might be unattractive well in the background. He did not know, either, that a teacher in his high school, a Zeta Sigma man, had written up to his Tresham brethren that Robert Chanler was a man worth getting, or that Bill Travers's older brother had been a Kappa Chi at Cornell and had sent word to one of the Kappa Chi seniors to look out for a couple of freshmen named Chanler and Durham. Knowing this he might have seen a rea-

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son for their friendliness, and a wider experience in rushing affairs would have told him that anybody sought by Zeta Sigma and Kappa Chi was bound to be sought by other fraternities.

Timothy Doughton, however, was not hampered by any such ignorance. He was not slow to discover that the kid from home was being rushed in good earnest by two of the best fraternities in college, and that being the case, Butt was certainly worth bringing forward as a friend of his. So Gamma Nu, whose pin Timothy had proudly displayed to Butt during the last Christmas holidays, entered the race for the capture of Freshman Chanler.

Tuesday afternoon Timothy appeared in Butt's room, all smiles and friendliness, all former differences forgotten, and bore him off to supper. Directly after the meal was over Butt was taken to the Gamma Nu house, and almost immediately found himself in an inner study, with Timothy, Grant, the football captain, and the Tresham star half-miler talking to him. There was no preliminary skirmishing, no guarded approaches, as there had been in his first visits to other fraternities. The others had spent their first appointments with him in sizing him up, leaving definite proposals until a second appointment. But Grant began at once to tell him how well they liked him, and in less than five minutes had asked him to join the brotherhood of Gamma Nu.

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Of course Butt was flattered. No freshman could have helped feeling pleased to hear the captain of the Tresham football team say the things Grant said to him. Besides, it was the first point-blank invitation to join a fraternity he had received. But while the star half-miler was seconding Grant's invitation, Timothy breaking in at every few words with appeals to their old-time friendship, Butt did some thinking. After all, he had met only a few of the Gamma Nu men, and he was not at all sure that Timothy's friends would necessarily be the ones he wanted. He did not know any of the other freshmen they had pledged, either. Besides, Donnel, in a hurried minute of privacy with him the night before, had advised him to look around pretty carefully before he made up his mind.

The half-miler finished his talk and there was silence for a minute.

"Well," said Grant with a smile, "what do you think? You've seen us and we've seen you, and we'd like mighty well to have you join us. What do you say?"

"You know it's a great advantage getting in with a crowd where you know somebody," put in Timothy.

Butt stared hard at the toe of his shoe for a moment in silence before he spoke. "It's mighty kind of you," he said, looking up. "I appreciate it,

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really—but—can I have a little while to think it over? ”

“Sure, sure!” said Grant heartily. “Take all the time you want. We don’t want to hurry you a bit—but it’s a good thing to get settled as quick as you can.”

“But you’ve been around to all the fraternities, haven’t you?” broke in the half-miler. “You’ve really seen all there is to see—and it won’t be any easier to make up your mind later than it is now.”

“I know, perhaps it won’t. But—well, I’d like to talk it over with my roommate, for one thing, before I really decide.”

“Your roommate?”

“Durham—the big fellow,” interrupted Timothy before Butt could answer. “Mighty nice chap. We’ve got an appointment with him later in the evening, and we’ll bring him around all right. You needn’t worry about him.”

Timothy should not have spoken just that way—it only made Butt more than ever determined to wait. “Perhaps I’m not doing just the proper thing,” he said, “but if you can hold the offer open——”

A knock at the door interrupted him. “Some one waiting for Chanler,” called a voice from the hall. Butt arose.

“Come, sit down—he can wait a minute,” insisted Timothy, pushing Butt back to his chair.

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"No, Tim!" Grant had risen, too. "We've got to keep these appointments square. What time are you free to-morrow, Chanler?" An appointment was made for the next night, and Butt was taken off to the Zeta Sigma house.

The evening brought him chances to pledge at both Zeta Sigma and Kappa Chi, but having once decided not to commit himself until he had talked over the whole thing with Durham, he stuck to it stubbornly.

Durham failed to show up at the room that night—he stayed at one of the houses, Butt learned later—and Butt missed him at breakfast, so the chance for a talk did not come. The next morning Butt went over to Southboro, the little city just across the river, to look for a couch—the Tresham furniture store had nothing that fitted into the corner by the fireplace just to suit him. It happened to be county-fair day at Southboro, and because work would begin in earnest the next day and because he loved horses, Butt was lured into staying over for the races in the afternoon. It was six o'clock when he got back to Tresham, and chance had it that Timothy, bound for supper, should see him stepping off the car.

"Just in time," Timothy called out. "Come on to grub with me."

"Really, Tim, I don't want to be sponging on

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you all the time," Butt protested. "I went to supper with you last night."

"Shucks! Come along!" And as he really had no good excuse for not going, Butt went along. Of course he was taken to the Gamma Nu house immediately after supper, where he was closeted again with Grant and Timothy. The half-miler was absent this time.

"Of course you know what we're going to ask you, and all the talk is an old story to you now, so we'll leave that out," began Grant when they had got him comfortably seated in an alcove. "You must have your mind pretty well made up about this fraternity question now, haven't you?"

"I've thought it over pretty carefully."

"Then I suppose you know which one you'd like to join."

"I like what I've seen of all of them, but I think there are two that I'd like to join more than the others. I'm not sure, quite, which of those two I like better."

"Is one of them Gamma Nu?" asked Timothy eagerly.

Butt hesitated a moment before he answered. Timothy had been so thoroughly friendly the last two days that he hated to say anything that might hurt his feelings.

"I'm sorry, but it isn't," he said finally.

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Both the others seemed at a loss just what to say next. "We're sorry, too—very sorry," said Grant at length. "We'd like to have you come with us tremendously. Are you sure we have no chance?"

Butt did not like to put it that way, but Grant's question called for a definite answer. "I've thought about it a whole lot, and I—I'm sure I'd rather go to one of these others."

"What's the matter with us, anyway?" demanded Timothy hotly.

Grant spoke up quickly and sternly. "That's not the question. Of course we see that there may not be anything the matter with us. It's simply that he likes the others better. We're sorry, but it isn't a thing he can very well help, or we, either. Would you mind telling us which these two fraternities are?"

"Zeta Sigma and Kappa Chi."

"Well, you won't make a mistake in joining either of them. They've both got a good lot of fellows, and I'll congratulate you honestly if you make either of them."

Grant's manner made Butt sorrier than ever that he couldn't have said "Yes," but it took away the awkwardness he had expected the situation to have. "Thank you," he said, and arose, reaching for his cap. "I—I think I'll be going along now. I've got to get back to my room."

Grant had risen, too, and held out his hand.

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"Now don't think because you happen to join some other fraternity you can't have any friends here at Gamma Nu. We want you to come around and be friendly just the same," he said as he shook Butt's hand and bade him good-night.

"Thank you," said Butt again.

"I'll walk along with you a ways," said Timothy suddenly, starting up as Butt reached the door. Grant eyed him sharply, but Timothy reassured him with a "You needn't worry; I know what I'm about," as he picked up his hat and followed into the hall.

They passed on to the street in silence and turned toward the Dorms.

"What have you got against Gamma Nu?" Timothy blurted out suddenly.

Butt shook his shoulders impatiently. "Don't be silly, Tim! Grant had it all right—I haven't anything against your fraternity. It's just that I like Zeta Sig and Kappa Chi better—a sort of not loving Cæsar less but Rome more."

"Oh, come on, cut out the joking! I'm serious."

"I'm not joking. I've made up my mind, though; so let's talk about something else."

"Look here, Butt, you and I have scrapped all our lives, but I want to cut it all out and forget it and be friends. Why can't you give a fellow a chance and be friendly, too?"

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"This fraternity business isn't going to keep us from being friends. Grant said that, too."

"Shucks! That's just hot air! I've been here a year and I know different. I'm the only friend you've got in the whole college, and yet you go and throw down my fraternity. You get in with one of those other crowds and what'll I ever see of you or you of me? I know how things work out here. Now those Zeta Sigs are nothing but a lot of snobs, anyway. They think there's no other crowd in college that can touch 'em and——"

"Now that's enough, Tim!" cut in Butt.
"They wouldn't talk about you that way. I haven't heard a single man knock another fraternity since I've been here except you."

"Oh, they'll do it fast enough as soon as rushing is over! They've got some fool rule about not doing it to freshmen when they're trying to pledge them. It doesn't prevent a fellow's being frank with an old friend."

"There's no need for that, and it won't do any good," said Butt shortly.

"But there's another thing! When hazing begins——"

"You gave me enough advice about hazing before I came down here."

"Lord! Can't you take a joke? I owed you something for that ducking, anyway."

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"I didn't do that ducking—didn't know anything about it till you'd gone. It was one of the kids."

"Well, I'm sorry, then. But this is my point. When the hazing begins we look out for our freshmen. We take them down to the house and let them stay there, where the sophomores can't get at them. No other crowd will do that for their freshmen. You'd better think of that, too, while you're thinking."

They had reached the entrance to North College. Butt stopped on the lower step and faced Timothy, an angry light growing in his eyes.

"I suppose that argument had a good deal of weight with you last year! You always were a squealer. Perhaps you think I'm going to run and hide from something all the rest of my class have to stay and face? I guess if hazing has been one of your precious traditions all these years I can stand it as well as everybody else has. If you want me to have any respect left for your fraternity you'd better not talk to me any more. I might get to thinking they were all like you." He turned and bolted quickly through the door.

"Hey—look here a minute!" Timothy called after him. But Butt hurried up the stairs without looking back or answering.

His room was dark and deserted. He locked the

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door even before lighting his lamp, lest Timothy should follow him and try to get in. He had no desire for further words with his "friend from home."

A little before eight Donnel came to take him to the Kappa Chi house. He was glad it happened to be Donnel, for his recent little tiff with Timothy had rather soured him on the whole business of rushing. Ever since that morning at the train he had looked up to Donnel as a sort of good angel, and Donnel's turning out to be a sophomore helped tremendously to wipe out the impression Timothy had given him of second-year men.

A senior named Dayton arose to greet them as they entered one of the downstairs studies of the Kappa Chi house. There was no one else in the room.

"Hello, Chanler. Glad to see you. Here, sit down."

Butt dropped his cap on a couch and took the chair they pushed forward for him.

"Well!" Dayton settled himself in another chair and reached for a match. "Been going the rounds again?"

"I've been to one place to-night and I've got one more appointment at nine o'clock."

"Good! That looks as though you had got things narrowed down so we could begin to talk

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about them." Dayton stopped to make sure his pipe was going satisfactorily. "Thought the whole business over pretty thoroughly?"

"Yes, I think I have."

"Well, that's the thing to do. This question of fraternities looks a good deal like any other ordinary part of the day's work when a fellow first gets here. Perhaps it seems as though all this rushing and fussing around was more trouble than it's all worth. I remember I thought something like that when I was a freshman. But when you've been here a while and lived in it, you begin to see that it's a pretty important thing after all. You're picking out a crowd of fellows you're going to live with four years—you're probably going to be closer to them than anybody you've ever known before except your own folks, to say nothing of the friendships that'll last all the rest of your days. A mistake may spoil your whole college course and start you wrong for your whole life. When you come to think of all it really means it seems a pretty big thing to decide in three days, in all this scrambling and flurry. But you'd be surprised to see how few mistakes are made. Don't you think so, Don?"

Donnel confirmed the surprising nature of the fact.

"Well! That's more or less how the general question stands." Dayton laid down his pipe and

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leaned forward in his chair, elbows on knees. "Probably you've been told all this before, but all the better if you have. Now our particular question—we told you last night that we'd like to have you down here at the house with us, and told you to think about it and come around again to-night and talk it over. We didn't try to say very much—just enough to let you know you could come here if you wished to. But now we want to tell you that we didn't ask you in the dark—we always mean to know something about a man before we offer him a pledge. Perhaps you know Fred Travers was a Kappa Chi at Cornell. He wrote us about you, and we were interested in you first because of him. Then when we saw more of you we liked you on your own account."

He paused. Butt, however, if this was all news to him, made no sign. In fact, the mention of Fred Travers swept away any lingering uncertainty there may have been left in his mind, but he was mortally afraid that if he said so he would seem to be throwing himself at them, so he kept silent. Dayton, misinterpreting his silence, drew himself together for a final plea.

"Now we don't bank on our house, though we think it's a pretty decent sort of a place, or our college honors. We have plenty of them—Phi Beta Kappa men, athletes, and all that—we can trot 'em

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out for you if you're interested in that sort of thing. What we want is a crowd of clean, manly fellows, the kind that make a good brotherhood, to stick together and help each other along, and have a good, jolly time together. We've got nine freshmen pledged now. There's Hawkins, the football man, and Grey, the lame fellow—he rooms just across the hall from you—and your roommate, Durham."

"Durham?" echoed Butt.

Dayton's mouth twitched in a subdued smile. "Yes. He wanted to wait and talk with you about it, but he finally admitted that he was for Kappa Chi, anyway—he just wanted to be sure of you—so we got him to pledge. I hope you're not going to disappoint him. Can't I put a pledge button on you and shake hands on it?"

Butt knew perfectly well what he wanted to say, but he still hesitated.

"I promised Zeta Sigma I'd see them again before I pledged anywhere," he said slowly.

"That'll be all right if you're sure you want to pledge here. Aren't you?"

"Why—er—yes. I was just waiting to talk it over with Durham."

"Well! That's all there is to it, then." Dayton was on his feet, shaking Butt's hand and grinning as if the fate of a nation had been happily settled. "Don't fix it up with Zeta Sig—or if they

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insist on seeing you again, we'll call it that you aren't pledged yet but want to."

Donnel, smiling radiantly, waited only long enough to give Butt's hand a hearty grip, then dashed off to the telephone. In less than two minutes he was back again.

"It's all right," he exclaimed. "Now on with the button!" and he pinned the pledge button of crimson and gold on the lapel of Butt's coat. Then they led him into the parlor.

"Here's your delegation—come, fellows, shake hands with Chanler!" called Donnel, and the little groups scattered around the room came clustering about to offer Butt their congratulations.

"Good work, Butt! I knew you'd do it—that's why I didn't wait," grinned Durham, giving Butt's hand a prodigious shake. "Here, Hawkins—I guess you haven't met my roommate," and he stepped aside to make way for another giant, taller and bigger even than himself.

"How d' do?" Hawkins made Butt feel comically small as he reached down to shake hands with him. "I've seen you before, but I guess we haven't been really introduced. Durham, here, and I have been talking about you. He seemed sure of you, so we've been fixing up a triumvirate for mutual protection—a sort of Jack and the Giants."

Everybody, being in a celebration mood, laughed

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as if Hawkins had made a brilliant joke, and they all gathered around the big fireplace to talk over the last three days and compare experiences. Butt felt as if he had been taken into the bosom of a large and happy family, and he snuggled back into his corner by the fire, content merely to look on and listen to the merry talk and laughter. By and by they clustered around the piano and the older men started singing. The freshmen did not know the songs, but they picked up enough to join in from time to time, humming along in happy disregard of tune or time. Then they all said good-night and started for their rooms.

“Pretty good lot, aren’t they?” asked Durham as they climbed the hill to the Dorms.

Butt answered, “Uh-huh,” without knowing what he was answering. He was wrapped in a gloriously rosy dream. Verily, his lot had fallen in a pleasant place!

CHAPTER IV

SOPHOMORE VISITATIONS

BUTT slammed his way into the bedroom,
wide awake and tingling from a cold shower.

“First she gave me candy,
And then she gave me cake”——

he warbled, rolling up the window curtain with a
noisy whirr.

“And then she gave me ginger-bread
For kissing her at the *gate*.”

With the last word a slipper flew from his foot
and struck the curled-up heap on Durham's bed that
was Durham still sleeping.

“First she gave me candy,
And then she gave me ca-ake”——

To insure a more effective aim the other slipper was
thrown by hand.

“Oh, come!” grunted Durham sleepily, stretch-
ing out and turning over. “Chapel isn't till after
eleven this morning. Let a fellow have a little
sleep!”

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Butt declined to argue the matter. He jumped up on the foot of Durham's bed and began another chant, flapping his bathrobe and stamping time with his bare feet until the bed shook:

"You *must* get up, and you *must* get dressed,
And you *must* get out, my dear!
For *la-dies* all should *look* their *best*
When the *mus-ket-eers* ap-pear."

A vigorous kick from the disturbed slumberer brought Butt tumbling on top of him, and the last line of the song was smothered in the bedclothes. "Aw, quit tickling!" gurgled Durham. A tussle followed that ended in Durham's rolling on to the floor and dragging Butt with him.

"Satisfied?" gasped Durham, sitting up, breathless and laughing.

"Do you know what time it is? We won't get any breakfast unless you get a hustle on you," and Butt jumped to his feet and began scrambling into his clothes. "Lord! We've got to get things straightened out here to-day. I don't know where to find a thing. Did you see that blue necktie of— Oh, here it is! Say, isn't it good to be all settled and not have anything to worry about? No more rushing, or trying to decide. I'm glad that fellow Grey is in our delegation. He's a mighty nice fellow. I wonder what——"

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But Durham had disappeared into the bathroom, and Butt suddenly discovered that he was talking to himself.

After breakfast they went to work putting their rooms to rights, and by chapel time everything was settled. Because it was the opening of college, chapel came at half-past eleven that day, and there Butt and Durham saw all their class together for the first time. It was a big class, as Donnel had said, and filled the freshman gallery to overflowing. As he looked over the crowded seats and down upon the main body of the chapel, all a-buzz with the gay noise of the upper classmen moving about and greeting one another, Butt felt a little thrill of gladness that he was there, a part of it all. The freshmen sat rather silent, still strangers, but it would not be long before they would be talking and laughing together in as friendly a fashion as the men downstairs.

A hush came as the organ began the Doxology, and lasted through the prayer. But after the hymn the white-haired president arose to speak, and the old chapel rang with the hearty applause that greeted him. His words, largely a welcome to the new men, were few and simple, but they voiced a spirit which awoke something in Butt he had never felt before—a realization that Tresham College was, after all, something more than a place where he had come to

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live and study for four years. For an instant Butt caught a glimpse of an ideal, and a body of men working and playing their way toward it; and he found himself wondering how he ever could have listened seriously when Bill Travers urged him to go to Yale. There couldn't be a better place in the country than Tresham.

Then everybody stood up while the faculty filed slowly out. The freshmen arose uncertainly, not just sure what they were expected to do. As the last professor passed down the aisle, a shout of "Sit down, freshmen!" accused them of having blundered, and they sat down, grinning sheepishly.

"Stand up!" came a stronger shout from below. Some of them hastily arose again, to be greeted with another yell of "Sit down!" Then it dawned upon them that they were being "horsed," and they resumed their seats, keeping them stubbornly in spite of the yells and cat-calls that assailed them. This sort of treatment, coming after all the general goodwill and "Glad-you're-here" air of the chapel exercises, was confusing, and they waited until the men downstairs were all out before they ventured to move again. A rumor mysteriously started that the sophomores were waiting for them outside, and they all crowded together as they passed down the stairs, determined that, whatever happened, they must not be separated.

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Sure enough, the sophomores were swarmed in a compact body outside the door, barring their exit. A band of juniors on the edge of the crowd shouted encouragement as the freshmen stopped in the hallway, uncertain what to do.

"Come on, freshmen! Rush 'em! Don't let 'em keep you cooped up in there!"

Butt was in the front rank, jammed in between two bigger men, and try as he would he could not stand against the force pushing at his back. In an instant he was shoved into the crowd of sophomores. Then he no longer thought of hanging back. There was a fight to be fought, and for five minutes life had no object but to show that jeering mob of sophomores that they could not hold him. Pulling, shoving, striking out with elbows and fists, he and his classmates battled their way through until they landed on the other side of the crowd with a rush that sent them sprawling. Up they jumped, to plunge again into the fray. Their first taste of class spirit had aroused a mighty thirst for conflict. But already the juniors were rushing in to separate the combatants, with shouts of "All over! No more rushing!" Reluctantly the freshmen held themselves in check, forced to be satisfied with having successfully rushed the sophomores once.

Then the freshmen, under the guidance of a half dozen juniors, trooped into the big room under the

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chapel for their first class meeting. It was not a very orderly affair, but they finally succeeded in electing a chairman—to act as president until the regular elections—and a committee to help him in laying out plans for the big freshmen-sophomore contest, the flag rush, which was to come on Saturday night. By the time the meeting was over it was time for dinner.

In the afternoon there was a recitation. As soon as it was through Butt hurried down to the field for his first view of the football practice. Durham and Hawkins were both out for the team, and he waited while they got a rub-down after practice to walk up with them.

After supper they collected in Butt's room—Durham, Hawkins, Grey, and Grey's roommate, Wells. Wells was the man who had been elected class chairman.

"Come on, Durham!" cried Hawkins, as Durham lighted his lamp and settled himself at his desk with an open book before him. "You aren't going to start plugging now! It's bad for the digestion right after supper like this."

"Don't you mind me. I've got to keep up in my work if I want to stay out for football, and this math is the blamedest stuff I ever tackled."

"Noble youth!" jeered Hawkins, grinning. "Does our society bore you?"

"Run away and play," returned Durham.

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"Those terrible sophs will drop around by and by, and then I can't study, anyway, and this recitation comes the first thing in the morning," and in spite of anything more they could say he stubbornly applied himself to learning why the intersection of two planes is a straight line.

Butt started a fire, and the rest of them gathered around the fireplace to talk over the day's doings. Wells was full of the plans for the flag rush.

"Oh, we can sure win it!" he cried eagerly. "Look at the way we went through them coming out of chapel! I had a talk with Barnes this afternoon—he's that fellow that took care of the meeting this morning. First baseman, you know. He says we've got the best show a freshman class ever had. You see, they've changed the rules so the sophomores have to guard the flag. That's the hardest thing to do, and the freshmen have always had to do it before. That's why they've always lost."

"Hasn't a freshman class ever won the flag rush?"

"No—the sophomores have always had such an awful advantage, you know. They always know each other, for one thing, so they aren't all the time fighting their own men; and then it's a good deal easier for one man who has been through the thing once to sneak in and get the flag down, than it is for a lot of green freshmen to prevent him. That's

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why they changed the rule, so as to even things up a little."

"I don't think a lot of that committee," broke in Hawkins. "That man Lawson doesn't look as if he knew enough to plan a decent walk around the chapel."

"Well, I don't know," responded Wells judiciously. "He struck me as being a pretty decent sort of a chap, and he seems to know a whole lot about strategy. He's read about every battle that was ever fought, I should think."

"Huh! He'll plan it all down so fine that he'll spoil the whole thing."

"Oh, he can't—the other fellows have some say about it."

"Well, it seems to me—" began Butt.

"*Lights out, freshmen!*" came a great shout from beneath their windows, and Butt's contribution to the discussion was never revealed.

"There they are!" grumbled Durham. "I'll never get this stuff learned. I don't know as much about it as I did before I started."

"*Lights out, you on the second floor!*"

Durham reached a reluctant hand toward the lamp.

"*Put that light out or we'll come up and do it for you!*" shouted one voice above the rest.

Durham slowly turned down the wick.

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"They're just kidding," protested Hawkins.
"Don't you do it."

"Put it clear out!"

A puff, and the room was in darkness except for the glow from the fire.

"I guess we'd better get out," said Wells.
"They'll expect everybody to be in their own rooms," and he groped his way into the hall, Grey hobbling after him.

"Well, I'm going to stay right here," announced Hawkins, settling himself on the window seat.

The sophomores could be heard downstairs now, tramping through the hall and making a prodigious racket. Sitting there waiting in the dark, with the noise of the invading enemy in his ears, Butt began to feel the least bit nervous. Of course, it would all be fun, but he rather wished the coming visitation were over.

Presently the door opened and three or four figures showed in the doorway, dark objects against the light from the hall.

"Freshman Chanler!"

"Who is it?"

"Is Freshman Chanler here?"

"Yes." Butt rose in response to the gruff voice.

"Light up!"

Butt struck a match, in his haste burning a finger on the still hot lamp chimney. Then he looked

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around. Timothy Doughton stood just inside the doorway, swaddled in a thick sweater, with a felt hat pulled low over his forehead and a huge paddle in his hand. Behind him were three others. They advanced into the room, closing and locking the door after them.

"Who are these? Freshmen?" demanded Timothy.

"Yes."

"Well," turning to Durham and Hawkins, "you go into the bedroom. You're football men, aren't you?"

"Yes." Durham answered this time.

"You're in training, then. Get to bed. You stay here," addressing Butt.

Durham started for the bedroom, but Hawkins did not move from his position in the window seat.

"Here you, freshman! Did you hear what I said?" demanded Timothy, stalking over to the window seat with a flourish of his paddle.

Hawkins suddenly sprang to his feet. "Are you talking to me?" Timothy stepped back, a bit startled by the towering figure that confronted him.

"Yes, I am. Don't get fresh now. We've got business with Freshman Chanler."

"Well, go ahead. I'm going to stay here."

Timothy hesitated. He did not quite know how to manage this young giant. As he pondered, there

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sounded from the hall a thunderous stamping of feet and whacking of paddles against the wall, halting just outside. Some one tried the door and found it locked.

"Come, freshman, open up!"

Timothy stood irresolute an instant, then unlocked the door. A crowd of sophomores piled in noisily, reinforcing the ruffianly effect of their old clothes and paddles with a great deal of talking in very gruff voices.

"Whose room is this?" asked the leader, a round and roly-poly person whom everybody called "Willy."

"Mine," answered Butt. Durham had retreated into the bedroom.

"Why, my child!" Willy looked down at Butt in mock amazement. "What are you doing out of the nursery at this hour of the night? Deary me, this isn't a kindergarten! What is your name, little one?"

Butt's face grew very red. "Chanler," he answered, trying to see the funny side of what was evidently considered a pretty good joke.

"What do you mean, Freshman Chanler, by locking your door? Were you afraid some horrid sophomore would come in and run off with you? Did you think we were boogy-men?"

"He didn't. This lean gentleman is the cul-

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prit," broke in Hawkins, pointing to Timothy. A titter ran through the crowd, and Timothy reddened. Willy gave him a keen look.

"That isn't in the game, Doughton," he said shortly. Then turning to Hawkins, "Your name is Hawkins, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Please remember that that isn't a nice way to speak of sophomores, even if they are so rude as to come into your room and lock the door. Now these gentlemen"—he indicated his classmates with a motion of his paddle—"are members of the honorable class of Noughty-Odd, and they have decided to favor you with a little call. It is customary on occasions of this kind for the hosts to provide a bit of entertainment for their guests—nothing elaborate, you know, merely a little modest amusement, just to show that you feel hospitable. And it is also customary to say 'Sir' in addressing one of them. Do you understand?"

Hawkins hesitated an instant. "Yes—sir," he drawled.

"Very well—only don't make the mistake of thinking it's a joke. And you—" turning to Butt—"you have followed my remarks?"

"Yes, sir," answered Butt promptly. He thought he could detect an undertone of raillery in Willy's pompous speech, and it reassured him.

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"Good, my child! Now, what can you do for the gentlemen?"

He was less ready with an answer this time. This being treated like an infant in arms wasn't so funny, at all, and the laugh that greeted it drove every idea from his head.

"Come, come, little one!" Willy spoke with exaggerated kindness. "Don't be bashful. Can you sing?"

"Not much."

"*What?*"

"Not much."

"*Sir!*" Willy scowled ferociously and some one from the rear emphasized the word with a whack from a paddle.

Butt took the hint. "Not much, sir."

"Good! Modesty is becoming in the young. Well, let us hear you sing not much. Let me see—what would you like, gentlemen?"

"Hiawatha," suggested some one. The suggestion was followed by a groan from the company.

"Oh, that will do as well as anything for not much of. Go ahead."

Butt stood silent, feeling very foolish and grinning sheepishly.

"Wipe off that smile! Now begin. Don't you know how it begins? 'Oh, the moon is all agleam,'" prompted Willy.

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Butt cleared his throat and started:

"Oh, the moon is all agleam on the stream
Dum-de-dee, dum-de-dee-dee, dum-de——"

"Oh-h!" A chorus of protest arose. "Don't you know the words?"

"No, sir."

"Now, that's unfortunate! Your musical education has been seriously neglected. But you are young yet; don't let's get discouraged. We'll have some words of our own. Let me see— Ah! I have it! Try the laundry list!"

Butt looked at him in amazement.

"Dear, dear! Don't you understand? Laundry list! L-a-u-n— Here, Eddy, you must have one. Show him what I mean!"

"Eddy," who eked out his slender capital by acting as college agent for a city laundry, produced his "unsurpassable tariff of prices" and handed it over to Butt.

"Now, right down the list! Freshman Hawkins, you can chant an accompaniment—a sort of obligato, but not loud enough to submerge the soloist."

Hawkins scowled and took his place beside Butt.

"We are waiting."

After a couple of false starts Butt nerved himself

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to the attack, Hawkins droning out a tuneless bass the while:

“ Dirty collars, dirty shirts, dirty cuffs,
Dirty hose, dirty wrappers—— ”

“ No, no! Eddy doesn't cater to the ladies! Stick to the masculine apparel. Don't say 'dirty,' either—it's a vulgar word. Use soiled—'soil-éd' to fit the meter.”

Butt tried to smother a laugh, choked, and called forth a chorus of “ No levity, freshman! ” “ Start again! ” commanded Willy.

It took a moment of embarrassing silence and an application of the paddle to sober Butt sufficiently to go on:

“ Soil-éd collars, soil-éd cuffs, soil-éd shirts,
Soil-éd hose, soil-éd towels, soil-éd handkerchieves.”

Hawkins floundered hopelessly on the last low note, which broke up the song. Butt ended with an hysterical giggle.

“ That will be enough for that—it's going to your head, little one. I think my friend Thomas here had better take you in hand and see if he can't calm you down. You mustn't go to bed with all this excitement on your mind.”

“ Here's a freshman hiding! ” Some one had

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routed out Durham and brought him into the light, red and shamefaced.

"I wasn't."

Thomas, a tall, spectacled youth, with a very grave countenance, stepped forward.

"Don't be afraid," he said, eying Durham's huge bulk solemnly. "What is your name?"

"Durham."

"Durham? Durham? Where have I— Ah, that's the name that made tobacco famous! Bull Durham! We'll have to call you that—it fits your shrinking nature so splendidly. Now let me think! We must try something rather mild at first, I think. Ah! I have it—see if you can't corral a few more and we'll have some dramatics." A little band of emissaries left the room and returned with Wells and Grey. "Now we have quite a company. Let me see—we must have something classic. How would 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' please you?" Thomas's grave face broadened into a paternal smile and he beamed down upon the freshmen through his glasses. "That's what we'll do. We'll have *Eliza* cross the ice first, with the following cast: *Eliza*, Freshman Hawkins; *Eliza's babe*, Freshman Chandler; *bloodhounds*, Freshman Bull Durham and—your name, please? Thank you. And yours? Grey? Thank you. *Bloodhounds*, Freshman Bull Durham and Freshman Grey; *a cake of ice*, Fresh-

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man Wells. Now, gentlemen, clear the stage, if you please."

Thomas briefly rehearsed the actors and the play began. The space between the two windows was the river, in which Wells floated wildly about, striving, according to orders, to put plenty of action into his part. On the window seat Durham and Grey lifted up their voices in hoarse yowls and deep-toned bayings, while Hawkins perched on the edge with Butt in his arms.

"Ah Heaven help me the river is full of ice and the bloody hounds are upon muh," announced Hawkins in a complacent monotone.

Thomas fixed him with a sorrowful gaze. "No, it is not a nice day out, as your optimistic tone would indicate. It is a dark and stormy night, and the only hope for you and the child lies in plunging desperately across the seething river. Now get into the spirit of it and plunge!"

Urged on by the bloodthirsty hounds, *Eliza* arose and started nonchalantly across the room. But the passage was not to be such a calm one. The cake of ice, fired with dramatic fervor, lurched violently and unexpectedly at her feet, after the manner of a football tackle, and poor *Eliza* and her hapless infant were plunged headlong into the turbulent waters.

A round of applause greeted the end of the scene,

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and Thomas hurriedly rehearsed his company for the next.

"You are sadly deficient in histrionic talent, Freshman Hawkins," he said sadly. "Wells, you are promoted to a speaking part—you can be *Uncle Tom*—and Durham, you will be *Little Eva*. Chatter, do you think you could achieve a good, ferocious scowl? You can be *Simon Legree*, then. The other two will be the quartet, and you are to sing while *Little Eva* passes away."

A few more directions and the play was on again. *Simon Legree* scowled fiercely and thrashed poor *Tom* with the blue necktie he had had difficulty in finding that morning, while *Uncle Tom*, who seemed inspired with the very spirit of Thomas and needed no prompting, protested brokenly that though his miserable black body might belong to his earthly master, his heart was God's little garden, and that's all there was to it. Entered *Little Eva*—a bit lumberingly, for Durham could not successfully give the illusion of being girlish—and rescued her black faithful, to be borne by him then, not without difficulty, to the window seat, where she expired amidst smothered laughter and the strains of "Waltz me around again, Willy," from the semiquartet of angels.

"That will be enough, I guess," said Thomas when the scene was finished. "Shall we on to the

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next quarry?" On they decided to go, and trooped out of the room, laughing and bidding their victims good-night with entire friendliness.

Thomas stopped to execute an elaborate hieroglyphic on the door with a piece of chalk. "If you have any more visitors, show them that," he said. "That is a sign that you have been called upon. You'd better go to bed now."

The freshmen, left alone, looked at one another and grinned.

"And that's hazing!" exclaimed Butt. "Oh, Timothy! Oh, my beloved Timothy!"

"Your beloved Timothy makes me tired," said Hawkins, dropping his grin and speaking with a growl. "I see where he is going to walk into trouble if he comes monkeying around here much more. He's a nasty one."

"Please!" pleaded Durham, trying to clear his desk from the disorder it had undergone through being the seat of some half-dozen sophomores. "The intersection of two planes is a straight line, but I don't know why, and I've got to find out. Do you know, Butt?"

"Oh, I'm going to bed, anyhow. I'm all stiff from that practice this afternoon. Come on, fellows!" said Hawkins.

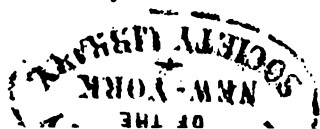
With a good-night they departed, leaving Butt and Durham to their geometry.

CHAPTER V

THE FIGHT FOR THE FLAG

REGULAR recitations commenced the next day, and life began to follow a more orderly course. The new men continued to be reminded in various ways that they were nothing but freshmen, but it all seemed to be done in a good-natured spirit. There was always a group of sophomores on guard near the steps of Langton Hall to give the alarm if the freshmen made any attempt to take their class picture, and to relieve the monotony of their watch they made any unfortunate that happened to be wandering about do stunts for them. Butt learned early the wisdom of keeping out of their sight, and by sticking to his room he managed to escape anything more inconvenient than having to trot along with his cap in his mouth on his way to recitation.

Room 32 North appeared fated from the beginning to be a gathering place for the unemployed. Hawkins—some one had christened him "Husky," a name that seemed likely to stick—found solitude in his own room irksome, and frankly announced his



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intention of hanging out there as much as he could, and Grey and Wells, from across the hall, soon learned that it was a most convenient place to drop in whenever they wanted company. A junior, who belonged to no fraternity and therefore lived alone in the Dorms, paid it a visit that morning and earned a standing welcome by numerous hints as to how freshmen could contrive to make their existence a little less troubled.

Altogether, Butt and Durham found little cause to complain of loneliness. Acquaintances were made rapidly, and Durham, who continued to worry about lessons, was inclined to wonder if he would ever have any chance to study.

Friday evening a few freshmen, who had not taken kindly to performing for the sophomores the night before, were visited again and given more strenuous treatment. It was rumored that one, of particularly stubborn spirit, had to be taken out and ducked in the river before he became properly meek. But Room 32 suffered no disturbance beyond an occasional opening of the door, when a head would pop in, see that the occupants were freshmen who had showed they knew their place, and pop out again. To save the sophomores inconvenience, Durham at length left the door open, and the three—for Hawkins was with them—were permitted to study in peace until shortly after ten o'clock.

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Then Timothy appeared. He had intended to have a little fun with Butt the night before, but the latter's refusal to take him seriously and Hawkins's belligerent attitude had irritated him so much that to-night he was determined to do some genuine hazing. Hawkins, being a football man, must be let alone, but Chanler was legitimate prey. Ten o'clock was the retiring hour for all football men, and he had counted on Butt's being alone. As it happened, Durham and Hawkins were only just putting aside their books. Timothy was a bit taken aback, but he entered boldly with his two companions.

"You football men ought to have been in bed long ago," he remarked. "Is this the way you keep training?"

Hawkins slowly measured him with his eye.

"I'll 'tend to my own training," he said at length, "and you can get out and 'tend to your business."

"You go to bed. I'm going to have a talk with Chanler," retorted Timothy.

"That's all right—I don't like the way you come snooping around here. Have your talk and get out. If you try any funny business you'll hear from me."

"And me, too," supplemented Durham, struggling valiantly to disguise his good-natured voice and speak fiercely.

"That's all right!" broke in Butt. "I can take

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care of myself, I guess." It nettled him that Timothy should be given a chance to think he was hiding behind anyone.

"I guess it will be all right," said Hawkins meaningly, as he picked up his books and left the room. At a look from Butt, Durham blew out the light on his desk and went into the bedroom.

"Why do you want to talk to me?" asked Butt, arranging the books on his desk.

Timothy waited until the books were arranged and Butt looked up at him before he spoke.

"I suppose you think because you were let off easy last night that this hazing is a sort of picnic—just a matter of form? It was, as far as last night went—something the whole class goes through. But there's something more to it for certain cases, and you happen to be one of them. You've been fresher than green paint ever since you struck college, and just because a lot haven't seen it is no reason you're going to get by. That makes it all the more my business to take the matter up."

Butt hesitated between anger and amusement. He decided it would be too ridiculous to take Timothy seriously in this strain.

"You'd make a beautiful villain, Tim," he said. "You're almost persecuting me. What are you going to do?"

"Get on your coat and hat!"

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"What for?"

"You're going out with me."

"What for?"

"No matter. Get on your things and come along—we can't wait all night."

The thing was ceasing to be amusing. Butt felt his face flushing and his heart began to beat with angry jumps. He sat down with an elaborate display of calmness and looked Timothy in the eye.

"I'm not going," he said, and a tremor of excitement crept into his voice.

"Look here," broke in one of Timothy's companions. "You'll save a lot of fuss if you come along quietly."

Butt stood up again, leaning his head forward and peering up at the speaker through puckered eyelids.

"Are you a friend of Tim Doughton's? Because, if you are," he went on quickly without giving the other a chance to answer, "you must know him, and you must know that this business isn't right. If you don't know him, it's time you did. He's the biggest coward I ever saw, and the way he comes sneaking in here when he thinks my roommate's abed ought to prove it to you. He didn't dare say anything until he had me alone—he wouldn't now if you two weren't with him, in spite of my not being anywhere near his size. I'm not going out with you

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because he hasn't any reason to ask me to, or any right."

"*Will you shut up?*" roared Timothy, who had been making repeated attempts to interrupt. "If you want to wear a coat, put it on. You're coming with us."

Timothy's rage had its usual effect on Butt and calmed him.

"Has he told you what these terribly fresh things I've done are?" he asked.

The two sophomores looked at each other and then at Timothy. Apparently he had not.

"What is the trouble, anyway? I guess you didn't tell us."

"Oh, he's been fresh and impertinent every chance he's had," answered Timothy angrily. "He told me to go to thunder when I told him to take off his hat, for one thing. I've known him all my life, and I tell you he's too fresh for any use. He was in school and he is still."

"What else has he done?"

"Have I got to go on the witness stand and give testimony? If he didn't deserve it I wouldn't be making all this fuss."

Butt spoke again. "I've been told you don't talk much about fraternities here after rushing is over," he said, his voice shaking in spite of himself. "But I'm going to tell you this. I don't know

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whether you belong to the same fraternity as Tim or not, but it doesn't matter. Yesterday Grant offered me a pledge to Gamma Nu, and I didn't accept it. Tim walked up to the Dorms here with me and said several things he hadn't any business to say. He finally told me that if I'd pledge they'd keep me at the house where the sophomores couldn't get at me, and see that I wasn't hazed. I didn't pledge, and that's one of the fresh things he hasn't told you about."

Timothy's face went all shades of red, and he snapped his teeth together sharply. "You might as well tell a story that'll stand on its own feet while you're about it," he said with a sneer. "That's a pretty poor attempt."

"If you're in with him," Butt went on, "all right. But if you're not—" he stopped.

There was a moment's pause, then Timothy took a determined step forward. But he stopped again, for his companions' faces wore a serious and forbidding look.

"I'm a Gamma Nu man," said one of them at length, "but we don't haze freshmen for that sort of thing. I—I'm sorry he said anything like that. The rest of us didn't know about it." He looked at Butt almost appealingly. "I hope you won't—" he stopped awkwardly and changed his sentence. "I hope you don't think we stand for things like that?"

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His distress was so plain that Butt was sorry he had told them. "No. Oh, no!" he hastened to say. "And I didn't like to speak about it. I won't again. But I wanted you to see my attitude toward Tim right."

"Look here!" Timothy cried angrily. "What's the matter with you? Do you suppose I'm standing for any trumped-up yarn like that? Why, the kid's making fools of you—he'll have it all over college to-morrow how he fooled three sophomores out of hazing him!"

"We'll talk it over—somewhere besides here," the sophomore returned. "Come on." The other sophomore had not spoken at all. Timothy started to say something, but his companion seized him by the arm and the three went out without another word.

As the hall door closed, the door of the bedroom opened and Durham peered in.

"I was listening," he said, almost apologetically. "I wanted to be sure he didn't try any—any funny business."

"Oh, it's all right—only don't tell about it. It sort of cut those fellows up, I guess. I bet Tim's getting it now." He laughed a bit nervously, and leaned over to untie his shoe. "Do you think I did right to tell them that?" he asked.

Durham looked at him with a puzzled face.

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"Well, you are a funny one!" he exclaimed.
"Of course you did. Why not?"

"I don't know. They're so touchy when you say anything about fraternities up here. I'm afraid I've got Tim into trouble with some of his own men. Don't say anything about it, anyway." Butt finished his preparations for bed in silence.

The next day the coming flag rush was the chief thing the two lower classes had to consider. In the morning the sophomores, confident in the belief that they couldn't help winning, since sophomores had never lost, gayly set about preparing the pole for the contest, drafting any freshmen they could lay hands upon to do the work for them. There was really nothing to be done, for the pole stood, as it had stood the year round, all ready except for sticking the flag in the socket at its top. But the men who had been through one rush before knew from experience that they could tire the freshmen out by working them hard during the day. Besides that, they had the labor of their own freshmen days to be revenged for, so they had the pole dug up, the hole remade, and the pole set up again, with new-brought stones to steady it and many pails of water from the well to water it with.

The rush was to be held in the open place between the chapel and the Gym. The chapel stood on the highest point of the campus, itself on a hill,

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and behind it the ground sloped sharply to an even space, in the center of which stood the flagpole. The pole was nine feet high, as the rules required, and wrapped thickly with burlap for lessening the discomfort of any who bumped against it in the heat of battle. At its top was a deep socket into which the stout iron pipestem flying the flag was to be stuck. To win the rush the freshmen would have to get the flag down in the ten minutes allotted for the contest.

The occupants of 32 North fared badly that day. Durham was captured just as he was coming joyfully out of his only recitation—they had only morning recitations on Saturdays—and made to fetch pail after pail of water from the well just behind the chapel. Butt—and for once he blessed his size, because it brought him an easy task—was set to trimming the grass about the flagpole with a tiny pair of nail scissors. Few freshmen escaped doing work of some kind, and not until the dinner hour was there any chance for them to get together in the room under the chapel and learn the plans for the rush.

Lawson, whose intelligence Hawkins had questioned so frankly, had used his knowledge of military affairs to good advantage and evolved a scheme of attack that even Hawkins admitted looked promising. With guards posted at the doors, lest some

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sophomores should be spying about, he outlined his plans, illustrating them with diagrams on the black-board, and his classmates, eager to be convinced, could find no flaw in them.

In the afternoon Durham and Hawkins had their enthusiasm rudely shaken by an order from the coach that no football men should go into the rush. There was too much possibility of some one's getting hurt—an ankle sprained or some such injury, that would unfit them for playing if a chance came for them in the opening game the next week.

"That's all rubbish!" grumbled Hawkins. "How is a fellow going to get laid up in a measly little rush like that?"

"I don't know! But we've got to obey orders," answered Durham mournfully.

"Oh, I suppose so! But if I see Drake or any of the other sophomore football men in it, you won't see me hanging around looking on!"

Butt had his grievance, too. Never before had he felt the disadvantage of being small so bitterly. He scolded so earnestly about it that the other two forgot their own woes in laughing at him.

"Never mind, Kiddo," said Hawkins consolingly. "You're so small they won't pay any attention to you, and you may get a chance to fly away with the flag without anybody's seeing you."

"Huh! A fat chance a little shrimp like me

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will get!" retorted Butt gloomily. Whereat they laughed again.

With the falling of dusk the freshmen began to assemble by the corner of the Gym. The rush was not to come till eight o'clock, but when the first roll call was held at quarter past seven, every freshman was there, clad scantily in his oldest clothing.

Presently upper classmen began to arrive in groups of twos and threes. As it grew darker the juniors, whose privilege it was to provide illumination, lighted some torches, which bobbed around above the heads of the gathering crowd. The sophomores were collecting up by the chapel. They could be heard, from time to time, shouting in concert, "*Noughty-Odd, this way! Noughty-Odd, this way!*"

"Oh, I wish it would begin!" exclaimed Butt, stamping about nervously. "What time is it?"

"Twenty-eight minutes yet," answered Durham, striking a match to look at his watch. He was sitting on the Gym steps with Hawkins and two other exiled football men.

A junior came over with a torch.

"Are you fellows all here?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Wells. "Listen here, fellows!" he called, raising his voice. "I guess you all understand what you've got to do. Lawson will lead the big squad. You're to go up on the side of

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the hill, and when the gun is fired rush down. I'll look after you," addressing a smaller group that stood a little to one side. "Now I think Mr. Barnes will say a few words to you."

Barnes, renowned as the Tresham first baseman and the hero who had all but captured the flag his own freshman year, took his stand beside the torch-bearer.

"Now you fellows want to go into this thing to win! You can do it—look at the way you wiped 'em up in that chapel rush last Thursday! Noughty-Odd were never any good, anyway. We licked 'em in every single thing last year except the football game, and if you let them win this rush you'll be the laughingstock of the whole college. They've got some big husky men, but you don't want to be afraid of them. They haven't any sand, and if you once get 'em going, they haven't a chance in the world. You've got the thing planned out in first-rate shape, and if you keep your heads and fight for every ounce that's in you, you're going to win! Now do a little cheering and singing to warm yourselves up. Get into it good, and show 'em you're not afraid!"

Wells stood out in front of them again and led them in the class yell. It was a brand-new yell, just learned that day, and it was a bit ragged at first, but they got together at the end, and the final "Noughty-

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Even! Noughty-Even!" echoed bravely over the campus.

A mocking yell from the sophomores answered them, sounding clear and steady from their rallying place by the chapel.

"Give 'em another!" So the freshmen yelled again, for the juniors, for the seniors, then again for themselves, gathering confidence from the noise they made. Some one started a song and they all joined in, whether they knew it or not, stamping their feet in time to the music.

"Cut it out now. Let's rest," cried Wells, hoarse with so much shouting. A senior came around to inspect their shoes. Everybody was required to wear rubber sneaks in the rush.

"What time is it now?" whispered Butt huskily.

"Ten minutes of."

Butt peeled off his sweater and handed it to Grey, who stood by, kept from the rush by the lame foot. He shivered as the chill October air struck upon his back, covered only with a thin running shirt.

"I wish you fellows could get into it," he said, slapping his arms nervously.

"You'll have to uphold the honor of 32 North," said Durham with a rueful laugh.

"Listen here!" broke in Hawkins. "I wasn't fooling this afternoon. They won't notice you so much just because you aren't big. If you see an

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opening, take a chance and duck in! You can't ever tell."

"Well, I'll——"

"Now, fellows!" Wells was speaking again. "You do what Lawson tells you, and fight, *fight* like all possessed! We're going to get that flag!"

"You bet we are!" came a scattered shout in answer. Then the larger squad that had been told off under Lawson's leadership moved slowly to their position on the side of the hill.

"Good luck, Butt," said Durham as they started away. He and Hawkins joined the crowd of spectators around the pole. They elbowed their way into the front row, Hawkins swearing under his breath at the fate that made him a mere onlooker. The crowd was dense now, jammed in a closely packed circle about the pole and with difficulty kept from invading the open space in which the rush was to be held.

A moment later the sophomores came marching down, taking their places around the pole with a strong, confident cheer. Hawkins felt a pang of misgiving as he saw how high up the flag was, fluttering limply on its staff, which was held firmly in the socket by two strong, bare-armed men standing on the shoulders of those beneath them. Around the pole they were packed six deep, the biggest at the center. He saw Donnel among them, who nodded

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and laughed as he caught his eye. Hawkins turned away quickly.

"What chance have we got with them? Just look at 'em! Do you see Drake anywhere?"

"All ready?" called some one.

"Wait a minute! All right—all ready!"

Pop! went the gun. Hawkins strained his eyes to see that dark mass huddled on the hillside. Would they never start? Ah! they were moving, slowly at first, gathering speed as they came.

"Way there! They're coming!" and the crowd parted at one side to let them through. They were coming fast now, a huge, wedge-shaped body, getting up a terrific momentum as they reached the bottom of the hill. The sophomores braced themselves to meet the coming crash. Then— Oh, Lord! They might have known it, with all of Lawson's fine planning! A little band of sophomores suddenly darted out from one side and threw themselves in front of the rushing mass. The leaders stumbled over them, fell, and those behind came piling on top in a confused heap. Wells's little flying wedge, rushing in according to the plan, was just too soon, and went to pieces on the edge of the crowd. Hawkins heard a laugh from some one near the pole, then the sophomores let out a yell of derision.

"Up — at 'em!" shouted Wells hoarsely.

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"Everybody for himself now!" They picked themselves up and rushed blindly into the fight.

Butt suddenly found himself hurled spinning out into the edge of the crowd, propelled by the arm of a huge sophomore. Hawkins grabbed him as he tottered.

"That was Drake!" Hawkins shouted exultingly. "I'm going in!" He ripped off his sweater and dashed into the struggling mob, pushing Butt before him. "Duck down!" he panted in his ear.

With lowered head, shoving, pushing, Butt edged his way in. Slowly, working by inches, he wormed himself along, twisting in and out among the close-jammed bodies, until suddenly his groping hand touched the pole. The crush was tremendous, surging back and forth, but he stuck there. He drew in a deep breath of the sweaty, reeking air, and gradually managed to straighten himself up. Close to him a burly figure was pounding straight forward with his big arms, muttering to himself. In a momentary lessening of the frightful pressure Butt leaped up and yanked himself to the fellow's shoulder. He could see now. One of the men guarding the flag-staff had been dragged down. The other was still there, clinging safely with one hand, with the other striking at every arm that tried to clutch him. Slowly Butt pulled himself up until one hand grasped the staff. For a moment they thought he was the

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other sophomore climbing back to his old position, and eager arms were lifted to help him. His other hand reached the staff.

"It's a freshman! Pull him down!"

He tightened his grip and clenched his teeth. He felt strong hands clutching at him from below. Sweat streamed into his eyes, blinding him. The hot, sweaty air choked him. Then the sophomore guard saw him and began striking hard-fisted blows at his upturned face, swearing softly as he struck. Butt ducked his head and held on. A hand gripped his shirt behind, pulling mightily. "Hold on! Hold on!" he sobbed wildly, as if to another person. "Oh, please hold on!" Then through the shouting he heard Hawkins's voice: "Hold on, Kid; I've got him!"—saw Hawkins's big hand reach up and slowly drag the sophomore down. Free from the blows of that striking arm he lifted his face again. Oh, he couldn't hold on any longer! He felt his arms being pulled from their sockets. He shut his eyes and put forth one great effort. His shirt ripped—for one blessed instant he was free. The hand clutched at him and could get no hold on his bare, slippery back. He reached up, jerked the flag from its socket, and fell back, a yell of triumph crashing in his ears.

He hugged the flag to him, dropping limply into the struggling crowd.



“ ‘Hold on, Kid ; I’ve got him!’ ”

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For five minutes the circle around the flagpole swarmed with fantastic figures in torn shirts, half naked, dancing madly about, hugging one another, shouting hoarsely. They lifted Butt and pranced around the flagpole carrying him on their shoulders, where he swayed, laughing and sobbing weakly, and waving the precious flag. Then Wells made himself heard and led a cheer—the long college yell, with "Butt Chanler" on the end of it. In that moment Butt would not have changed places with the noblest x-footer that ever trod the earth.

"Good work Kid!" shouted Hawkins huskily, reaching up to grip his hand. Durham, who had not into the finish of the fight, was just behind him.

"Oh, Husky!" Butt hugged his big friend joyfully as he slipped to the ground. "Where's my weater? My shirt is all torn off of me."

"What do you care? Look at me!" The freshmen were forming into marching file. Hawkins seized Butt and Durham by the arms and swung into line. "Look at all of us!"

And, arms thrown about shoulders, they marched cross the campus and down into the town, chanting:

"We are, we are, we are, we are,
The class of Noughty-even!"

CHAPTER VI

NIGHT-TIME STRATEGY

THAT night Butt had his first taste of what being a hero among a crowd of boys is like. The next day was Sunday, and quiet—the first day since college opened that gave him a chance to sit down in peace and think things over; but in the afternoon quite a company gathered in 32 North to talk over the flag rush and do homage to him. It was more embarrassing than anything else, for he was more astonished than anyone that he of all men in the class should have been the one to capture the flag. It had been pure luck, as he told them, but they insisted that, even so, it was something to be the man who won for his class the first freshman victory in the history of Tresham flag rushes. So he basked in their frank admiration, and enjoyed it. In the evening he wrote a long letter home about it, and went to bed with a happy feeling that being a “runt” had compensations after all.

It seemed hours before daylight the next morning when he was awakened by some one shaking him gently but with much determination, and whispering

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loudly: "Wake up, Chanler! They're going to take the class picture!" It took a minute before he was wide enough awake to get his bearings. The room was still dark and he could not recognize the disturber of his sleep.

"Who is it?" he asked sharply.

"S-sh! It's Pennel. Get into your clothes and don't make any noise."

Pennel was the junior who roomed on the top floor. Butt crept out of bed and peered out the window into the darkness.

"Why, it's raining," he whispered. "They can't take any picture—there isn't light enough. Lord, it's cold!" He shivered and looked back at the warm bed.

"It'll get lighter in a little while. It's only half past five now. Get dressed, and for Heaven's sake don't make a lot of noise. There's a sophomore sleeping in Wells's room."

Durham was in the study, already half dressed and grumbling about the barbarous custom that pulled people out of comfortable beds in the chill middle of the night. The one thing in the world that could always ruffle Durham's habitual cheeriness was to be haled out of bed before he had finished his sleep. Butt groped about in the dusk and found some old clothes.

"Get down back of the Gym as quick as you

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can. They're going to collect there and come up to Langton in a bunch," explained Pennel, then went out to continue his round of waking freshmen.

"You fellows up?" a voice came in a strained whisper from the hall door. It was Wells.

"Humph!" grunted Durham. "I should say we were. This is a pretty time to be dragging a fellow out of bed. The old picture will never come off in this rain.

"S-s-sh!" hissed Wells in alarm, stepping into the room and drawing the door shut behind him. "They've got a man posted in our room. He's asleep on the couch, and we've locked the door, but there's no use of waking him up. Aren't you about ready?"

"Wait a shake—" Durham tugged himself into a sweater and picked up his cap. "Come on—I suppose we've got to try it."

Butt was left alone to finish dressing. It did not take long, and in five minutes he was out in the hall, groping his way downstairs. No one had dared light the gas there, and he had to feel his way along the wall, creeping along noiselessly in his rubber-soled shoes. Just as he came to the outer door and was reaching out to open it he stumbled against some one in the darkness. He started back, his first thought that it was some sophomore.

"Who is it?" he whispered. The other had

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backed away from him at his touch and did not answer. His silence made Butt still more uncertain. If it was a sophomore— He stopped, undecided whether he ought to try to escape or to keep this prowler from warning others and perhaps breaking up the picture. So they both stood in the dark hall, listening to each other's breathing and each waiting for the other to move.

Suddenly came a terrific banging on a door upstairs—the man in Wells's room had awakened and found himself locked in. In the same instant they both lunged for the door and bumped together again. Butt seized the other by the arm.

"Aren't you a sophomore?" he asked.

His companion jerked himself free. "No, I'm not. I'm a freshman and my name's McCarthy. Who are you, anyway?"

Butt laughed. "My name's Chanler. We might have stood here all day—let's see if we can't shut that fellow up! He'll wake up every sophomore for miles around."

"Who is it?" McCarthy asked as they climbed the stairs.

"Some sophomore they had posted in Wells's room. Wells locked him in. Lord, what a racket!"

The imprisoned guard was pounding lustily on the door and shouting, "Picture! Picture!" at the top of his voice.

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"Come on, you've got to cut that out!" cried Butt, shaking the door knob.

"I'd advise you to let me out!" was the reply, shouted between blows on the door.

"Shut up, or we'll come in and punch your head for you!" yelled McCarthy.

For a moment the sophomore's pounding and shouting ceased, then they heard him open a window.

"Noughty-Odd, all out! Freshman picture!"

"Now he's doing it!" cried Butt. "We've got to stop him somehow. Wait till I get my key—it may fit."

But McCarthy had already pulled a huge bunch of keys from his pocket and was rapidly trying one after another. In a moment he had thrown the door open.

It was getting lighter now, and they could see the sophomore leaning out the window. McCarthy made a spring for him and dragged him in, choking off his cries with an arm thrown about his head.

"Huh!" he grunted, as he jerked the unhappy guard to the floor and sat upon him. "Now, will you shut up?"

"This'll fix him," said Butt, producing a trunk strap. Together they bound him, legs and arms, tying a pillowcase tightly over his mouth to prevent any more noise.

"Look out—you're choking him!" remonstrated

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Butt as McCarthy jerked the pillowcase into a hard knot about the prisoner's throat.

"Choke nothin'! Now, I guess that'll hold him." He stood up and surveyed the captive. "Come on, let's beat it."

They left the sophomore and hurried downstairs. Outdoors a chilly rain was drizzling. From the east the gray dawn was growing, sifting through the rain and the pale mist that hung over everything. They skirted the dormitory and down the slope to the Gym, sopping through the grass and dodging behind trees, that no watching sophomore might see them. Behind the Gym barely a score of freshmen were gathered, dripping and disgruntled, with Wells walking impatiently about in front of them, on the lookout for newcomers. Hawkins was hunched up in a corner of the building in a vain attempt to get out of the wet, and Durham stood beside him, a monument of dejection.

"You're a cheerful-looking pair," was Butt's comment as he stopped in front of them.

Hawkins merely glared. "I'm soaked through, and past caring," said Durham grimly.

McCarthy had marched into the midst of the group with the air of a man who comes to take charge of things.

"Is this all there are?" he demanded.

No one seemed to think the question worth an-

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swering. They merely looked at the questioner curiously.

"Who's got the camera?"

Again no one answered.

"This is a pretty mess! Who's running the racket, anyway?" McCarthy surveyed the little group contemptuously.

"And who may you be?" boomed Hawkins's deep voice from his corner—an irritating voice, just touched with sarcasm. McCarthy swung on his heel and faced the owner of it.

"I could ask the same question if I was curious," he answered, in a tone that Hawkins of all men was not the one to like. He lifted his huge bulk from its sitting posture and came out of the sheltering corner, while the rest, scenting an imminent quarrel, began to show signs of interest.

"Oh, this is McCarthy—he's a new man," broke in Butt with a quick gesture that included the whole company in the introduction. "And this is Hawkins—" turning to McCarthy. It was such an obvious attempt to bridge over a strained situation that McCarthy laughed.

"Glad to know it. Does he bite?" And then everybody laughed, for Hawkins was scowling like a thundercloud, not at all pleased with Butt's little effort to smooth over matters.

"Not little pups," he growled, and slouched

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away, leaving McCarthy to take what offense he chose. The latter flushed and was on the point of a retort when Wells, who had been reconnoitering around the corner, came hurrying up.

"Haven't any of you seen Lawson?" he asked nervously. "He ought to be here with the camera by this time—and there are some fellows coming down the hill that look like sophomores."

Instantly everyone made for the corner to see for himself. Sophomores the newcomers proved to be—a half dozen of them, with Lawson and the camera in their midst. The freshmen saw at once that there was no more hope for a picture that morning and some of them hastened precipitately away, leaving the rest to meet the jeers of the second-year men.

The sophomores came up with triumphant grins.

"*Good morning! A beautiful morning! Here we are with the photographer.*" Poor Lawson, bearing the camera, looked sheepishly at his crest-fallen classmates. "Are you ready, gentlemen? Look pleasant, please!"

"Oh, come on!" cried Hawkins in disgust, turning toward the Dorms. "Why didn't you tell me Lawson was engineering things? I could have finished my sleep if I'd known that."

"What's the use of knocking him?" protested Wells as they climbed the hill. "He knows all

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about cameras and taking pictures—besides, anyone else would probably have been caught just the same.”

McCarthy came swinging up to join them. “Nice headwork that guy showed,” he remarked with jaunty scorn.

Hawkins immediately changed front. “There weren’t enough there to make the picture count even if they hadn’t caught him,” he said shortly.

“Well, that doesn’t let him out. The whole thing shows pretty poor team work.”

“Why don’t you try your hand at running it? That might help.”

“Perhaps it would. Say, you’re right in on the anvil chorus every time, ain’t you, Hawkins?” returned McCarthy with surprising serenity.

Hawkins disdained to answer. They had reached the dormitory, and he shoved open the door and stamped up the stairs in silence.

Durham got into some dry clothes, which restored his equanimity, and settled down to his book.

“Only quarter past six! This isn’t so bad after all, now I’m up. I can get in an hour’s plugging before breakfast if some one doesn’t come buttin’ in. Golly! The old lady ’ll think a starving Cuban has struck the place when breakfast does come, though.”

Butt lighted a fire and sat down before the fireplace. He had conceived the germ of a plan—a plan for taking their picture that would outwit the sopho-

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mores completely if he could work it out successfully. He sat pondering upon the details when the door opened and McCarthy walked in.

"Oh, here you are! Mighty convenient having a pasteboard tacked on your door—I might have hunted all over the place before I found you."

The plan had begun to take definite shape, and Butt was annoyed at this interruption, but he asked McCarthy to take a seat.

"Oh, I'll look 'round a bit first. Got any smokes?"

"Before breakfast?"

"Sure! You can't hurt me with anything in that line—done it ever since I was a kid." Butt produced some cigarettes, from which McCarthy coolly selected one without the bother of a "Thank you," and, after lighting it, began a leisurely inspection of the room.

"Nifty little cozy corner you've got up here. What's this?" taking down a silver trophy cup from the mantel.

"Oh, just something I got in a tennis tournament."

"'Wonowasset Country Club.' That's that place up near Millton, ain't it?"

"Yes. Ever been there?"

"Oh, yes—was there last summer with Tim Doughton. Pretty slow sort of a joint, I think.

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Didn't suppose they sported trophy cups or I'd have gone in for one of them myself. They all help. I've got a box of 'em coming up to-day if the old freight company's on to its job."

Durham had been shifting uneasily in his desk chair, and here he got up and went into the bedroom with his book. As he closed the door behind him, McCarthy sat down and gave Butt a quizzical look.

"Is he taken that way often?"

"How?"

"Plugging before breakfast."

Butt laughed. "Oh, Durham thinks he ought to plug all the time! He's afraid he'll flunk off the team."

"Oh, is he the football man?" McCarthy's tone was more respectful. "Well, he'll get wise."

"Durham doesn't learn Latin and math. and that sort of thing very fast, and he has to keep at it pretty steady."

"Shucks! Athletes don't have to study."

"They have to keep up in their work, though. One condition keeps a freshman off the team."

"Oh, tell that to the hayseeds! I know—" But it suddenly occurred to McCarthy that perhaps he had better keep what he knew to himself, and he broke off abruptly. "I bet that man Hawkins don't keep his nose to any grindstones. Say, does he always carry that grouch around with him?"

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Butt had no chance to answer, for Hawkins himself suddenly came banging in at the door with a "Come on, you! It's time for grub!"

Butt was rather relieved at his entrance, in spite of the dislike for McCarthy which Hawkins made almost painfully obvious. Butt himself had not found his liking for McCarthy increasing during the last half hour, and he had no wish to talk over Hawkins and Hawkins's "grouches" with him.

"It's only a little after seven—we can't get breakfast yet," he said, looking at his watch.

"It'll be ready by the time we've been up to the post office. Where's the Durham?"

"In the other room."

Hawkins went into the bedroom without a word to McCarthy. McCarthy grinned, though there came a queer glint into his eyes.

"Cordial, ain't he?" he remarked. "Well, I'll see you later," and after helping himself to another of Butt's cigarettes he sauntered out of the room.

When chapel was over the sophomores lined up outside and hooted their derision at the freshmen for their unsuccessful attempt at a picture. The derided ones got what comfort they could out of assuring one another that, even if there had been enough men on hand, the picture couldn't possibly have turned out well on account of the poor light. But that did not help greatly in the face of the sophomore jeer-

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ing, and Lawson, especially, longed to run away and hide himself from every mortal eye.

Butt went back to his room more than ever anxious to perfect that scheme of his. There were not more than three or four sophomores living in the Dorms, and he had an idea that these, even if reënforced by a few special guards, could be easily overpowered at night and the picture taken by flashlight. He went upstairs to talk it over with the junior, Pennel, before suggesting it to any of his classmates. Pennel, as the only junior on the field of action, had a special feeling of guardianship for the freshmen, and he listened to Butt's eager outline with flattering interest.

"It sounds good," he admitted. "But I don't know the least thing about taking pictures. Did you ever try to take a flashlight outdoors?"

"No, I never heard of its being done—but I don't see why it couldn't be if you had powder enough. I suppose they always use powder for the flash."

"I suppose they do—I don't know. There's one thing, anyway—they won't be expecting it at night. Those fellows that are on guard up here are really here to see if you freshmen get up early in the morning or not."

‡ That's what I say!" cried Butt eagerly. "It'll take 'em completely by surprise, and it won't be

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hard for the whole bunch of us to keep 'em from giving any alarm till it's too late to stop us."

"Yes, I should think it would work out all right if the flashlight business is possible. Talk it over with a few of the fellows in your class—only just a few, and don't let the rest of them know anything about it till the night it comes off. You'd better get the thing done as soon as you can. You've got till Thursday, of course, but you can't tell what may happen. I wouldn't leave it till the last night."

Wells, Hawkins, and Durham were the first freshmen to whom Butt unfolded what he had in mind. Wells was immediately enthusiastic.

"Bully!" he cried. "It'll fool 'em—Lord, how it'll fool 'em! We'll do it this very night."

"A great head has our little Buttress," grinned Durham. His good-natured soul had never evolved an original scheme in his whole life, and he was frankly proud of even the smallest of Butt's exploits.

"I never heard of taking a flashlight outdoors," remarked Hawkins thoughtfully.

"Oh, dry up, Pessimisticus!" cried Wells. "I hope you haven't. It's the most fitting thing in the world that the glorious class of Noughty-Even should be the first to discover it."

"We can find out if it's possible easy enough," said Butt. "There's a photographer in town, isn't there?"

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"Of course—there ought to be, at any rate."

"I don't think we'd better be seen consulting any photographers," said Hawkins. "That ass Lawson has made *photographer* a byword with the sophomores, and they'd smell something sure as doomsday if they saw any of us visiting one of 'em."

"They've been smelling different somethings right along, so I don't see how that would do much harm. But one of us could go over to Southboro—I'll go myself," Butt volunteered.

"Good! Go over this afternoon, can't you? And we'll spread the news around among the fellows and be all ready to-night!" cried Wells, springing up as if he must impart the wonderful scheme to some one immediately.

"Wait a minute! Something might leak out if you go telling everything now. There's no need till we're sure about it—the fellows will all be in their rooms at night, and we can go around and get them out then. You're class chairman, and if you know what's going on it's all right—and we won't be raising any false alarms."

Wells had to admit, a bit reluctantly, that there was wisdom in this counsel, and finally it was decided that in the afternoon Butt should go over to Southboro and make the best arrangements he could. Hawkins, whose faith in others had been utterly destroyed by Lawson's fiasco, took it upon himself to

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see that a camera would be on hand, and Wells and Durham were delegated to collect the class as soon as Butt returned with word to go ahead.

But when it came to slipping away unobserved Butt found it was not such an easy proceeding after all. There are always a lot of fellows in a school who are eager to attach themselves to anyone who has made his mark, and winning the flag rush had brought Butt into sufficient prominence to make him sought after. As he came out of his last afternoon recitation he discovered that it was not an altogether simple matter to detach himself from the friendly group that accompanied him up to the dormitories without having to answer embarrassing questions. It would have made the whole thing easy if he could have told them what plan was afoot, but he himself had imposed the condition of secrecy, and he must abide by it. At length, however, he got away without exciting any suspicion. He was safe on the corner, waiting for the Southboro car and congratulating himself that he had managed the first step rather well, when McCarthy hailed him from up the street, his freckled face all a-grin.

"Hello, Chanler! Where you going?" he called.

Butt frowned with annoyance. McCarthy had not impressed him very favorably that morning, and he did not want to be saddled with him of all men

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just at this point. He waited until McCarthy was near enough so he need not shout before answering: "I'm waiting for the car."

"Going over to the 'Boro? Pretty early to start in the sporting game, ain't it?" McCarthy grinned familiarly and stopped beside him.

Butt smiled politely, though he did not like McCarthy's tone. It took too much for granted. "Oh, nothing like that to-day. I've got one or two things to buy over there—the stores here aren't so up to date as they might be."

"That's right—this town's worse than Brooklyn. I come from Brooklyn, you know. I guess I'll go along with you—there's nothing to do here, and I've got to kill the afternoon some way. Football practice is no good till they really get to playing the game."

The car bell was clanging up in front of the hotel and there was only a moment before the car would be coming along. Butt decided he had better tell McCarthy just what his errand was if he wanted to escape gracefully. He explained the picture plan briefly.

"Good scheme!" said McCarthy heartily. "I'll help you lug the stuff back."

"No—that might spoil the whole thing!" Butt exclaimed hurriedly. "If any sophomores saw two of us together they might suspect. I tell you—you

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meet me when I get back and we'll arrange things then. I'll try to be back on the half-past eight car—I'll get off down the street a ways so no one will see me"—the car was coming now. "And don't say anything about it to anyone—only three or four of us know about it, and we'll spring it on the rest at the last minute. Be sure and meet me—" He swung himself aboard the back platform without giving any chance for an answer, hoping that his excuses had not been so weak-kneed that McCarthy would see through them and be sore.

The Southboro photographer whom he visited was immensely amused at the freshman-sophomore situation as Butt outlined it to him.

"Well, well! What you college fellers won't be up to!" he chuckled. He was of the opinion that the flashlight idea was feasible if they used powder enough and something to throw the light all one way. He even produced a sort of screen, some three feet in height and made of sheet iron, which he offered as just the thing.

"Bring it back if it comes through the rumpus whole; if it don't, I'll send you a bill for it. Hee-hee! You college fellers!" A whole lifetime spent next door to a college town had not accustomed the old fellow to the ways of students, whom he persisted in looking upon as some strange sort of animal unlike the ordinary human boy. "I'd like to

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see how the thing works out myself. I hope you lick 'em. Anyhow, fetch the picture over and I'll finish it up for you."

The screen was too awkward to carry about the streets, so Butt left it in the store till time to go back. He wandered about the town until supper time, got something to eat, and finally took the car back to Tresham. Just before the car turned into the main street he got off. It was dark, but the big harvest moon was shining brightly. By its light he saw McCarthy emerging from behind a fence farther up the road.

"Got everything? What's that?"

Butt explained the uses of the screen.

"Handy little article to carry around with you. Is it very heavy?"

They stole up the hill toward the campus, keeping in the shadows, and hid their burdens under a big pine.

"You watch the stuff till I tell 'em it's all right—they're waiting for me," said Butt. "Nobody's likely to find it, but I hate to leave it alone. You don't mind, do you?"

Up in 32 North, Durham was nodding over the next day's Latin lesson, when there suddenly came the sharp rattle of pebbles thrown against the window. He stuck his head out. "Is that you, Butt?" he whispered loudly.

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"Yes—get Wells and come down here," came Butt's voice out of the darkness.

It was some minutes before Durham joined Butt outside the dormitory.

"That blooming sophomore is up in Wells's room again to-night," he announced ruefully. "He's bound to get even for last night, if it's only by making a nuisance of himself. I gave Wells the wink, but he couldn't come right off."

"Are there any other sophomores posted around?"

"I don't know—there's probably one over in South College, and the ones that room here are sure to be on hand."

"You tell Husky it's all right and to come along with the camera—I'll wait under this tree—then get somebody to go around with you and collect the fellows."

Durham hastened away to carry out instructions. Presently Hawkins appeared with his part of the paraphernalia. They got McCarthy, whose presence Hawkins ignored completely, and made their way to Langton Hall, where the picture was to be taken. Rather to Butt's surprise McCarthy performed his share of the preparations in silence—Hawkins seemed to have a depressing effect upon his usually talkative spirit. At the proper distance from the steps Hawkins set up the camera on its tripod, as freshman

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picture rules require, while Butt and McCarthy arranged the powder in front of the screen, ready for lighting. Before they had things prepared the fellows began to arrive, appearing silently out of the darkness and collecting in the shadow under the wing of the Hall.

"Hasn't Wells come yet?" asked Butt, going up to them.

"Jones was talking to him, and he didn't dare leave," answered Grey, who, being an unimportant person, had been able to slip away without arousing suspicion.

"We're about all here," said another. "Have we got to wait for Wells? Isn't everything ready?"

"We ought to wait for him—it wouldn't be fair to leave him out. We'll wait a few minutes, anyway. Get together on the steps, so as to be all ready."

They collected on the steps, while Butt paced about impatiently. "How long do you think we ought to wait? Is the camera all fixed?"

"The plate's exposed ready for the light. Here—duck that match!" Some one who had started to light a cigarette hastily extinguished it at Hawkins's gruff command.

"Let's go ahead—Wells's not being in it won't hurt the picture any," said McCarthy, who stood with match box in hand ready to light the fuse.

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Just then a heavy panting heralded some one's approach, and a moment later Durham appeared, all out of breath.

"He's coming," he announced between gasps, and immediately Wells came running up.

"I said I'd be right back. He's likely to see what's up any minute——"

"Get up on the step there—hurry up!"

A pistol shot cracked from the direction of the dormitories—the sophomore signal.

"They're on!" cried McCarthy. "Here! I'm going to get into the picture." He tossed the match box to Butt and made for the steps. The box fell to the ground, and as Butt fumbled about for it he heard shouts and the distant sound of footsteps running toward them.

"Hurry—light up!" cried Hawkins.

For a moment Butt's hand searched, then found the box. He lighted the fuse and stepped back. A blinding flash, and an instant later the iron screen was kicked over as two sophomores came dashing up. The freshmen sent up a yell of triumph.

"Butt! The camera!" shouted Hawkins, grappling with both sophomores at once. Other sophomores were coming, running across the campus and shouting. Butt grabbed the camera, wrenched it from the tripod, and bolted. His eyes were still dazzled from the flash, and he had no idea where

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he was heading for, but he started to run for all that was in him. The moonlight was too bright for him to escape unseen, and he knew he was being followed. He could hear pursuers behind him. He swerved behind some trees down the hill and tried to run faster. But they were getting nearer—two of them by the sound, with others farther behind. He did not dare look back.

Then he heard one of them stumble and fall, with an angry oath. The others seemed to pause an instant, then came on again, gaining. Butt had turned into a meadow behind the Gym, running blindly, in the hope of getting somewhere where he could hide. Suddenly a board fence loomed up before him, and the pursuer was up with him before he could climb over.

Then he laughed with relief when he saw who it was.

"Good work—but your legs are too short," said McCarthy, vaulting over the fence and landing on the other side with a light spring. "That guy would have nabbed you sure if I hadn't tripped him up. We'll have to beat it some more."

The meadow was boggy, full of hummocks and little pools that gleamed in the moonlight. They ran along close to the fence, trying to keep in its narrow shadow, but it was impossible to go fast. They had not progressed far when McCarthy, look-

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ing back, saw two other figures getting hastily over the fence.

"This is no game," he grunted as he stumbled over a hummock. "We'll have to get out of this or we'll never shake 'em."

Butt agreed, though he did not stop to say so. He had to go cautiously lest he fall and break the precious plate that was to crown the evening's exploit with success.

"They've seen us," said McCarthy, looking back again. "Let's duck over into those bushes."

This movement meant splashing through a brook, but it took them out of the moonlight and gave them a chance to proceed a little distance unseen. They crashed their way through a stretch of undergrowth and small trees, coming on the other side to a wire fence that bordered a road. Under it they crawled and hurried toward where the lights of the town shone, nearly a mile away. Suddenly Butt stopped.

"Here's the car track!" he exclaimed. "This must be the Southboro road. Let's hide here—we'll take the first car that comes along and get the picture safe out of the way to-night."

They put their ears against a trolley pole; the low, whirring rumble, almost imperceptibly growing louder, told of a car approaching somewhere out of sight, but from which direction they could not be sure. They hid under some bushes by the roadside

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and waited. Five minutes passed. Then a head-light flashed down the track. It was the nine-thirty car, half a mile off and Southboro bound, turning into the long stretch of straight road by which they were lying. Almost at the same minute they caught the sound of voices, and peering out saw their late pursuers coming toward them. They had evidently given up the hunt and were headed for home.

McCarthy uttered a long, low oath. "If that isn't the rottenest luck!" he grunted disgustedly.

"S-sh!" whispered Butt. The two sophomores were almost abreast of them now, walking leisurely along and talking. Butt clung to McCarthy's arm, as if to keep him from springing out. The sophomores went by unsuspecting. The car had slowed up to pass through a switch, and was now coming nearer at increasing speed.

"We've got to try it," said Butt, raising himself cautiously. They waited till the car was almost upon them before they sprang out, signaling it to stop. The sophomores, whom the car had passed scarcely two rods away, saw it slow up, turned, and with a shout came running after it. The conductor was up front collecting fares. McCarthy sprang upon the back platform and the car came to a standstill. Butt swung himself on to the step, and at the same instant the head sophomore reached and caught his arm.

"Here!" he cried, thrusting the camera into

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McCarthy's hands. For a second he struggled, while McCarthy reached up and gave the bell rope a jerk. With a desperate shove Butt freed himself just as the car started forward, leaving the sophomore sprawling beside the track.

"Is it safe?" panted Butt, reaching again for the camera.

"You bet!" McCarthy replied gleefully, and leaning far out from the platform he called a derisive "Ta-ta!" back at their fallen foe.

CHAPTER VII

A BALKY CANDIDATE

WHETHER the picture would eventually turn out to be a success or not, the freshmen had all the glory of triumphing over their rivals, and they spent the rest of the evening in celebrating it. There was the procession around the campus and through the town which goes with every freshman victory, and the sophomores, seeking comfort from a dignified self-effacement, retired and left them to parade and sing undisturbed. When Butt and McCarthy stole back into town on the last car, after leaving the plate with the Southboro photographer to develop, they found a little handful in possession of the chapel steps, singing an impromptu pæan of victory, a bit hoarsely, but with unquenched ardor.

Butt was now doubly a hero, as the next days proved. Whatever part McCarthy had taken in the successful escape with the camera made no impression on his classmates, for the reason that McCarthy told them all about it, many times and with a boasting air. That increased the opinion, already well

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established, that he had a swelled head, while Butt, who naturally wanted to give him the credit that was his due, succeeded only in adding to his own reputation for modesty.

As a matter of fact Butt was not overmodest. He had a healthy liking for being looked upon with approval, and too much of it would have been no better for him than it is for anybody. But he had Hawkins, who was clear-headed and spoke frankly what he thought, whether it was complimentary or not, and he had McCarthy, who was a living and perpetual example of being too conscious of one's own importance, so he was in little danger of having his head turned.

Now that the class picture was taken, the general freshman-sophomore hostility was done with. There were interclass contests still to come, but they would be fought out on the athletic field, and the daily life of the new men was now undisturbed by any sophomore interference. The fraternities, too, now that they had pledged their men, suddenly altered their attitude toward them and adopted a policy of leaving them severely alone. It was an abrupt change, and coming after all the cordiality and friendliness that had made the first days in college so pleasant, it set many a freshman wondering what he had done to deserve it, and worrying lest he had been found wanting in some way and was going to be dropped.

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But as everyone was treated more or less alike, they concluded that it must be some custom that they would probably see the object of later. They improved their isolation by getting to know one another better.

Number 32 North, as it had threatened to at the beginning, turned out to be a general gathering place to which all the leading spirits of the class gravitated. Hawkins practically lived there, except when it came time to go to bed, and Wells, who always liked to be where there was plenty of company, haunted the room almost as constantly. The rest of the class soon found that it was a sort of headquarters, and those who were socially inclined formed the habit of dropping in after recitations or meals. Hawkins established himself as a sort of unofficial "weeder-out," and anyone of whom he disapproved generally stayed away after two or three visits, for the burly fellow had no scruples whatever against telling a man frankly what he thought of him. Lawson and McCarthy were the only ones on whom his remarks had no effect, and as Lawson was a pretty decent sort of a fellow, in spite of his mismanagements, Butt and Wells prevailed on Hawkins to quit picking on him.

McCarthy was impervious to everything, from veiled hints to the frankest outspokenness. He ignored Hawkins completely, and if Hawkins could

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not persuade him that his presence was not welcome, no one else had any hope of succeeding. So he came freely and stayed long, for few people ever visited him in his own room, and he did not at all like being alone.

There were lots of things about McCarthy that Butt did not like, but he could not find the heart to snub him. Ever since they had rescued the camera together McCarthy had assumed that they were comrades, and sometimes the way he hung around Butt was almost pitiful. It amused Durham, and because it was impossible for him ever to bear any deep ill-will against anyone, he never went farther than to joke Butt about his "crush." But Hawkins used to rail about the matter loudly and long.

"What in thunder do you stand him for? He's a mutt and a mucker and a grafter, and so conceited that he's actually sickening. If *you'd* tell him to get out, he'd get."

"I know," Butt would answer. "But what's the good of it? He doesn't do anybody any harm, and he's lonesome as the deuce. Nobody has anything to do with him. There are good things about him, in spite of his manner."

"Humph! You can say that about any poor dodo—even Timothy Doughton. I suppose lots of people see things to like in him. All the same, I don't see how it's up to us to bring out McCarthy's

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good points, anyway; but if you're crazy about missionary work, I guess he's a good subject."

"Oh, come on!" cried Butt, flushing. "I'm going to be decent to him till I have some better reason for not being than anything you've handed out yet."

Butt was perfectly sincere in this remark, but Hawkins's taunt had an element of truth in it that he would not have cared to admit. He found McCarthy a good deal of a puzzle, but in spite of his disagreeable qualities—suggestions of the rough life he must have led before he came to college—Butt had an idea he would eventually turn out pretty well if he were treated right.

One thing he did not understand. Since that morning of his first visit to 32 North, McCarthy had not mentioned Timothy Doughton, though Butt frequently saw the two together, and he knew McCarthy was pledged to Timothy's fraternity. This reticence was surprising in view of the volubility with which McCarthy aired his ideas on everything and everybody else, and Butt suspected that Timothy himself was at the bottom of it. He wondered if he would ever be forgiven for winning that prize back in high school. He did not worry much about it, however. He was too glad to be rid of Timothy and everything connected with him, and he took a good deal of satisfaction in thinking that that last

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attempt at hazing had been the very last of him, in the capacity both of sophomore and of fellow-townsmen.

College life now began to settle down into a more regular course. There was always work to do, and as the occupants of 32 North were not any more brilliant than the general run of freshmen, they had to buckle down to lessons. In spite of their new interests and new friends they managed to establish a working schedule, which their numerous visitors soon learned was not to be tampered with. Hawkins, for all the great contempt he had for "grinds," was really responsible for this orderly state of affairs. He had come to be looked on as a joint proprietor of the room, and when he said "Get out!" those who were not willing to stay and study got out, and undisturbed quiet reigned until whatever work had to be done was disposed of. Under this arrangement even Durham, for all his fears, got along so well that he lost some of his terror of flunking off the squad.

Durham and Hawkins, being "heavy" men, stood excellent chances of making the football team. They both came to college with Prep. school reputations, which they bore out in the early days of practice, and as the team that year lacked weight more than anything else, there was every prospect that they would both win their letter before the

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season was over. Butt attended practice faithfully, feeling that he must equal in spirit what the other two members of the triumvirate furnished in deeds, and every afternoon found him on the side lines, watching his big roommates with proud but critical eyes. When practice was over he offered his criticisms, which Hawkins scoffed at and Durham listened to with the respect he always had for any of Butt's opinions.

It was on the football field that Butt saw Timothy Doughton oftenest. Timothy, it appeared, was making himself a specialist in athletics. All branches received his careful attention, and it must be said for him that he knew as much about them as anyone could be expected to who had never done anything himself except play tennis. Baseball, however, was his particular field. He had managed his class team the year before and was now one of the most energetic competitors for the 'Varsity managership. As the only baseball in the fall is the annual freshman-sophomore game, all of Timothy's attention was just now concentrated upon the freshman players, who were just beginning to prepare for the contest, still two or three weeks off.

With the beginning of this practice McCarthy showed that in one thing at least his boasting had not been without some foundation in fact. He had talked a good deal about what he would do in base-

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ball when he got a chance, but everyone had got into the habit of thinking he was nothing but a "blower." On that first afternoon, however, when the freshman candidates presented themselves to Wadley, the junior who was to coach them, it did not take much knowledge of the game to see immediately that McCarthy for once was "making good." He told Wadley he was a pitcher, and was ordered to "deliver a few" to a would-be catcher by the name of Smith, to show what he could do. He delivered a few, and then some, as he would have expressed it himself, and Smith, who had little more than good intentions to qualify him for a catcher, decided that he couldn't hold him. "I'd stand about as much show trying to catch cannon balls at a hundred yards," he grinned as he surrendered his mitt and mask to another candidate; and though Smith exaggerated somewhat, his remark indicated the general impression McCarthy's début on the diamond created.

Several 'Varsity men, including the captain, had come down to inspect and get a line on the "green" material, and they collected in a little group to watch and discuss the new pitcher. Doughton, who had unearthed this prize and persuaded him to come to Tresham, speedily joined them, descanting on McCarthy's good points and telling something of his past record. McCarthy, it seemed, had been the

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star of a little one-horse school team down on Long Island, where Tim had discovered him.

"Why didn't you tell us you had a man like this in tow?" asked the captain.

"Oh, I wanted to surprise you," answered Timothy, complacent and proud. He expected this "find" to help him considerably when the time came for electing managers. It wasn't the sort of thing that could be reckoned in as so many points to his credit in the competition, but it would give those who did the final electing the impression that he was wide awake and a hustler, and that was something he thought sure to help.

"Well, if he can pitch like that in a game he's a good man," said the captain, and his words, having authority, were repeated, greatly to McCarthy's benefit.

Butt had wandered over from the football practice to see what sort of a showing his classmates were making in the baseball line, and as he saw McCarthy strike out man after man, he stared in astonishment. To be sure, the batters were mostly green men, but McCarthy "retired" them with an ease and precision that experienced players might face with a good deal of uncertainty. Butt, like the others, had taken McCarthy's baseball talk for mere blowing, and he chuckled to think how Hawkins would look when he was shown that "that swelled-

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head " could really pitch. McCarthy saw him on the players' bench and came over to sit by him for a moment.

" Sort of showed 'em, haven't I? " he said, unable to keep back a grin of satisfaction. " I know they all thought I was a four-flusher, but I've got the goods for 'em all right when it comes to this game."

" Glad of it," said Butt. " We ought to have a pretty good chance to beat the sophomores if the fellows practice up."

" Huh! " McCarthy's grunt expressed complacency and contempt at the same time. " I can't win a game alone. Why, those kids can't play marbles! "

" Oh, you wait till they've practiced a couple of weeks! "

" They'll need to—they're certainly playing like a lot of dubs to-day. There ain't one of 'em that could hit a fair-sized balloon if you'd give him a two-foot board to do it with."

Butt laughed. " Well, we'll see. They won't have a McCarthy to stand up against, anyway," and McCarthy went back to the pitcher's box, pleasantly tickled at the little compliment.

After supper that night, Butt, who ate at a boarding house uptown, was walking back to his room alone. McCarthy joined him just as he was turning into the campus.

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"Say," McCarthy exclaimed, "what do they do at senior elections?"

"Nothing special that I know of. Elect, I suppose."

"Aw, quit yer kiddin'! Of course they do some electin', but there's something else doing, too—some sort of special stunts. Don't you know about 'em?"

"No."

McCarthy smiled—almost a superior smile. "They come off to-night," he remarked, adding, in what he meant to be a casual tone: "I've been invited to attend."

Butt suddenly recalled something Donnel had said to him that morning after chapel. He did not see much of Donnel nowadays, but sometimes the sophomore stopped him to give him a bit of advice—advice which Butt usually found it well to follow. This particular advice had been to spend the early part of that evening in the library or somewhere away from the Dorms, for the annual senior class elections were to be held that night, and wise freshmen would all be out of the way. Butt looked at his companion quizzically.

"Are you going to accept?"

"Sure. I'm to be in my room at half-past seven and one of 'em will come around and get me. I guess perhaps I didn't make a little hit this afternoon?"

Butt had been on the point of repeating Donnel's

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hint, but McCarthy's gullible complacency silenced him. Besides, McCarthy had missed hazing. Butt had only a vague idea of what they did to freshmen at senior elections, but he surmised that it might be good for a fellow in McCarthy's present frame of mind.

"They probably would have asked you if they'd seen you," added McCarthy as they reached the entry of North College. They stopped at McCarthy's room, which was on the first floor. "Come in—they'll ask you along, too, if you're here with me."

"Oh, no!" Butt protested politely. "I don't want to—er—seem to be thrusting myself forward."

"Come off! Thrust yourself forward! You make me laugh. Come on in a minute, anyway—those cups of mine came to-day, and I want to show 'em to you."

It was only seven o'clock, and Butt yielded to McCarthy's urging. The trophy cups—a lot that must have stood for a long list of athletic triumphs—were placed in a conspicuous row on the mantel.

"Aren't they beauts?" asked McCarthy, displaying them proudly. "They've been nearly two weeks getting here—they've got the rottenest freight system here I ever saw. I went down and said a few things to their old agent—told him I'd sue 'em and all that, and they delivered my stuff in a hurry. What do you think of this one?"

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"It's a dandy," said Butt, examining the inscription. "Where's your name?"

"Oh, they don't put the separate fellows' names on 'em—they're club cups. I did more than anybody else to win 'em, though, so I just copped on to 'em."

Butt looked at him with a puzzled expression. "Why, didn't you—" He stopped, astounded at the thought that flashed into his mind, and then instantly ashamed that he had let himself entertain such a suspicion, even for a second.

McCarthy laughed easily. "Oh, that's all right! They belong to me as much as they do to anybody."

Butt found that the suspicion was not to be dismissed so lightly after all. He set the cup back on the mantel and turned toward the door.

"They certainly make a good showing," he said, a bit uneasily. "I'll have to be going along now, I guess."

"Oh, stay a while! My friend won't be here for quite a while yet."

"No, I guess——"

The door opened and Timothy Doughton came into the room. He took no notice of Butt beyond a mere glance, and spoke at once to McCarthy.

"Hello, Mac! Come on down to the room."

McCarthy smiled and threw out his chest. "Sorry, Tim. I've got another date. I'm not traveling with mere sophomores this evening."

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"What are you talking about?"

"Oh, nothing much! Only a friend of mine in the senior class is coming around in a few minutes to escort me to the senior elections."

Timothy stared at him in astonishment. "Are you trying to be funny?"

"No—straight goods. Ain't that right, Butt?"

Timothy broke into a laugh. "Well, you are green! Say, don't you know what you are invited for?"

"Sure! To be the guest of the senior class."

"Well, you come along with me. I thought they'd be after you, so I came up to get you out of the way."

"What are you givin' us?"

"Why, they're just making a goat of you. They'll take you and make a perfect fool of you—it's worse than hazing."

McCarthy flushed scarlet and stood looking at him in silence for a moment. "Well, I am easy!" he exclaimed disgustedly. "You can put me down for the original lemon. Is that straight?"

"Of course it is, and it's mighty lucky——"

The door opened again and two men, whom Butt recognized as seniors, entered.

"Ah, Mr. McCarthy!" one of them said, stepping forward. "I trust we haven't kept you waiting. Are you ready?"

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"Say, he's all right," broke in Timothy. "Get somebody that needs it."

"That's enough from you, Mr. Last-year's Freshman. Mr. McCarthy has kindly consented to honor us with his company this evening. Perhaps this gentleman—" turning to Butt. "You are a freshman, too, aren't you?"

"Oh, he's all right!" interrupted the other senior. "You'd better get to your own room," he said to Butt.

Butt did not wait for another hint. He went at once, and as he mounted the stairs he could hear Timothy arguing loudly. His arguments were apparently ineffectual, however, for a moment later the two seniors passed out the front door with McCarthy between them.

At the top of the stairs he met Wells just coming out of his own room, and together they entered 32. Durham and Hawkins were sitting before the fireplace with two other freshmen, Hall and Randall by name. A sudden hush fell upon them as Butt and Wells came in—the sort of hush that falls upon people when the person they are talking about unexpectedly enters the room.

Butt tossed his cap into a corner and perched himself on the arm of Durham's chair.

"Well, have any of you been summoned?"

"Summoned? What for?"

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"Senior elections. I just saw McCarthy carried off bodily, in spite of a gallant attempt our friend Timothy made to rescue him."

"What's up?"

"The seniors always have freshmen up to do stunts for them at their class elections," Wells explained. "They 'most always take men that'll be funny, or somebody that's been unusually fresh. Talk about hazing! Why, a junior told me it's a regular Sunday school beside senior elections. They just make a rag out of a fellow."

"Do McCarthy good," said Hawkins shortly. "I always said it was one of the worst things that ever happened to him, getting here after hazing was all over."

"Did you see him at baseball practice this afternoon?" asked Butt slyly.

"Of course I didn't. I have my own troubles afternoons. That man Parsons may be a good coach, but he certainly has some sort of a grudge against freshmen. He's kept at me till I don't know whether I know any football or not."

"What kind of a showing did McCarthy make?" asked Durham.

"Mighty good!" put in Randall enthusiastically. "That fellow can really pitch. The 'Varsity man will have to hustle some to beat him."

Hawkins stretched out his legs and groaned.

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"Lord deliver us! Now he'll never shut up. I warn you, Butt, I'll never come into this room again unless you put a damper on him. He'll camp out here with all his old trophy cups and hot-air about how the team ought to be run, until everybody's scared away."

"Oh, why not let him talk?" asked Randall. "He's got some license to, after all, and it doesn't hurt anybody. Besides, those cups aren't for baseball, anyway. They're for relay races and that sort of thing. Mac's a runner, too."

Hawkins scowled and Butt shifted uneasily. The mention of those cups recalled something he did not like to think about.

"It's a funny thing about him," said Hall. "You generally hear a lot about these Prep. school stars beforehand, but no one seems to have heard a thing about McCarthy."

"Why, he's from Brooklyn, and he played on some school team," said Wells.

"I know that—but I don't know what school, and I don't believe you do," Randall answered. "He never says anything about that—it's always the leaguers he's met and what they said about his pitching, and all that."

"Oh, it's all that Doughton's monkey business," Hawkins remarked. "He thought it would be a fine stunt to spring a surprise—a gallery play to get

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a pull with the baseball crowd. He's working his head off for that managership, and he doesn't care how he gets it. I think McCarthy 'll turn out to be a ringer, myself."

"Meanwhile McCarthy is entertaining the seniors," put in Butt, anxious to shift the subject. He was troubled with suspicions of his own about McCarthy, and like an ostrich that hides its head to escape danger, he wished to dodge anything that might increase them. "Do the juniors have freshmen up for their elections, too?"

"Oh, no!" said Wells. He seemed to know all about class elections. In fact, he had thought of little else for a week. Freshman elections were only three days away, and Wells, being chairman, naturally looked to being made president. This natural wish had been increased to a great desire by a letter his father had written him. In a letter home he had told of being elected class chairman, and his father, a feeble invalid who idolized "my son Walter," got from it the idea that he had been given one of the greatest honors the college had to bestow. In his reply the old man had dwelt with such fond pride on his joy in it that Wells felt he would rather have anything in the world happen to him than the necessity of telling his father that the chairmanship was really only a trying-out, and that in the real election he had failed to make good. His ambition

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was not selfish—he wanted to be president of his class chiefly because it would give a tremendous amount of pleasure to a lonely and sick old man; and Butt, who knew all this, had determined to do all he could to help on his election. “The seniors are the only ones that do anything like that,” Wells explained.

“I suppose it wouldn’t do to have McCarthy do stunts for us at our elections,” said Randall seriously.

“Of course not,” said Wells with equal seriousness; then he saw the twinkle in Randall’s eye, and laughed. “We might elect him class treasurer,” he added. “Collecting class dues would be stunt enough for anybody.”

But for some reason no one seemed to care for class elections as a subject of conversation, and the talk drifted to other matters. Presently Hall and Randall went out, after an interchange of nods and signs with Hawkins which neither Butt nor Wells noticed, and a little later Wells, too, bade them good-night and departed.

“Do you think Wells is going to be elected, Butt?” asked Hawkins, as Butt started to light his desk lamp.

“Of course. There’s nobody to run against him of any account. He deserves to get it, anyway, and besides, his heart is set on it. He’s got an idea his father would be heartbroken if he lost out, and I

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imagine he would be. His father's a funny old man—bedridden and all alone, and all wrapped up in Walter."

"The class won't think of that—they don't know it, anyway."

"They don't need to. I suppose they would think it was sort of silly. I don't believe there's any danger. He'll get my vote, anyway, and I promised to nominate him."

"Oh!" That one exclamation was the nearest Hawkins came to delivering the announcement Hall and Randall had left him to make—the announcement that a large number of the class had determined to make Butt himself president. They had been talking about it when Butt entered the room, and only the presence of Wells had prevented them from telling him themselves.

The next day McCarthy appeared more subdued than they had ever seen him before. Bits of what had happened at senior elections leaked out later, but for the present the freshmen knew only that he wore a more chastened air and did considerably less talking. His visits to 32 North were marked by an unusual quiet, which Hawkins noted with sarcastic scorn, and only at baseball practice did he seem the old unquenchable McCarthy.

Friday night the freshman elections came; 32 North, with Wells and Grey, started for the meet-

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ing in a body. Strangely enough, Butt had not yet heard anything of the plan to make him a candidate. As it happened, no one had spoken of it to him, though it was generally supposed that he knew, because Hall and Randall had been delegated to tell him. Wells, too, was just as ignorant, though for obviously different reasons.

The elections were to take place in the little room off the chapel where class meetings were usually held. The class collected outside and marched in, singing and shouting. This was their first really independent business meeting, and as there were no overawing juniors present, they celebrated it with an immense amount of noise. For several minutes they stamped around the room out of sheer joy at being all together and unrestrained, keeping thunderous time to the song they sang. Finally they found seats and sat down, still singing.

Wells took a chair on the little platform. After a moment he stood up and rapped sharply on the table. Gradually the hubbub died down enough for him to speak.

"Gentlemen—if there is no objection, we will proceed at once to the business of the evening, which is the election of officers."

"Go ahead!" shouted some one from the back of the room. Others took up the cry, and for another five minutes it was impossible for the chairman

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to make himself heard. He stood, smiling a bit nervously, waiting for the noise to cease. Then, "I'll appoint the following men to act as tellers," he said.

Each teller received a hilarious burst of applause as his name was called. When the last ovation had subsided, Wells spoke again. His voice shook just the least bit, for this election meant very much to him.

"The first officer to be elected is president. Will you make your nominations for president?"

"Mr. Chairman!" Butt was on his feet. He hardly waited for Wells's faint "Mr. Chanler," but struck at once into his little speech. "I guess everyone realizes without my saying it that the office of class president is a pretty important one, especially during our first year, when we have our reputation as a class to make. So it's important to put the right man into that office—one that will be the right kind of a leader. We have made a fine beginning as a class, and I know you'll all agree with me when I say that the man who has started out as our leader is just the one to go on leading us. I wish to nominate Mr. Wells."

A little outburst of handclapping followed. Wells stood with downcast eyes and flushed face. His hand gripped the edge of the table and he could not find voice to ask if the nomination were seconded.

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Butt sat down, conscious of a strange lack of enthusiasm, and wondered if he had queered his candidate by his poor speech. Some one seconded the nomination.

"Are there any further nominations?" Wells spoke the words with a sort of nervous defiance.

A silence had fallen over the room. For a moment no one stirred; then Hall rose to his feet. "Mr. Chairman," he said.

"Mr. Hall."

Hall cleared his throat. "I hope nothing I say will be taken personally," he began slowly, "and I don't want anyone to think I don't agree with what Mr. Chanler has said. I do. I'd even like to repeat what he said about our having made a fine start as a class. We've made a name for ourselves in the college by being the first freshman class that ever won the flag rush, and we pulled off our class picture in a way that made everybody sit up and take notice. We certainly do need the right man to keep us going the way we've begun. But"—he paused an instant, then threw back his head and went on rapidly—"but some of us think that the man who won the flag rush and planned the class picture for us should be our leader, and I nominate Mr. Chanler for president."

Even before he had finished a perfect storm of applause burst forth, and half a dozen men were on

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their feet clamoring for recognition. McCarthy, because he yelled loudest, had the satisfaction of seconding the nomination.

"Chanler! Chanler!" they shouted. "Put him up!" And those near him lifted Butt from his seat and held him up while the rest cheered. He looked about, bewildered and thrilled at this unexpected ovation. Then he saw Wells, and the hurt look in his eyes. He got down to the floor, and the noise subsided as they saw he wished to say something.

"Fellows," he began hesitatingly. It was not easy to find the right words for what he wished to say. This demonstration of faith in him filled him with a pride that almost choked him, but he felt that somehow it was all wrong—it was not fair to Wells. "I appreciate all—this—this—what you have said. But you've made too much out of what I've done. It was all more or less luck, my getting the flag. Anybody would have got it with my chance, and Wells and Hawkins and some others helped plan the picture. I thank you, but I stick by what I said when I nominated Mr. Wells. He has been our leader, and I wish to withdraw my name."

As he sat down he was sharply conscious of McCarthy gazing at him in blank amazement for an instant, then leaning over to speak eagerly to a fellow close by. A buzz of protest arose, while Butt sat with his eyes fixed straight ahead, feeling rather

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than seeing the grateful look and tremulous smile that Wells bent upon him.

"What is the pleasure of the class?" asked Wells after a moment.

"Mr. Chairman!" McCarthy was on his feet again, and he hardly waited for Wells to recognize him before he went on breathlessly: "I don't know anything about the pleasure of the class, but I think myself it's all rot for Butt Chanler to back out just so he won't hurt somebody else's feelings. It's a mighty nice thing to do, I know, and I don't know of another feller that would do it. But he's the man for the job, and he ought to be made to take it. You'll hunt a long time before you find a decenter feller than he is. I don't see how a man can have the nerve to run for an office everybody wants to give to some one else."

He sat down, flushed and very much in earnest. Butt knew what he had said was sincere, even if it wasn't considerate to Wells. An embarrassed pause followed.

Durham, after a couple of false starts, arose abruptly.

"Mr. Chairman!" he said, and his voice had a panicky sound. Durham was scared to death at speaking before a crowd, and it took an immense amount of courage for him to get up and say even these few words. "I guess Butt means what he says,

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and I make a motion that the nominations be closed and Mr. Wells declared unanimously elected." He sat down with an audible sigh of relief, wiping drops of perspiration from his forehead.

That put an end to the protest against withdrawing Butt's name, but Wells's election was not made unanimous. There were certain men who did not like him, and they had their own candidate, a fellow by the name of Atkinson. Butt's entry into the field, however, had made them hesitate to present him, and it was not until Durham made his motion that Atkinson was nominated.

"Are there any further nominations?"

There were not, and the tellers proceeded to distribute the ballots. A great hum of conversation arose, with a good deal of low-voiced wrangling, and it was plain that the class was pretty sharply divided—how evenly only the result of the voting could show. Atkinson evidently had some loud supporters.

"Has everyone voted?" asked Wells. After a moment the tellers started to collect the ballots, and a tense silence fell upon the room as they began counting them. Wells watched them with a strained expression as they whispered together in the corner, comparing notes. Finally, one of them stepped forward.

"Mr. Chairman."

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"Mr. Graves." Wells's voice was barely audible.

"The total number of votes cast, one hundred and fifty-seven. Mr. Atkinson has fifty-nine, Mr. Wells ninety-eight. Mr. Wells is elected."

Hawkins sprang up and led the cheer that greeted the announcement, while Wells turned his head away.

CHAPTER VIII

MIDNIGHT BUSINESS

OH, Bull! Bull Durham!" Durham was sprawled out on the window seat in the dark, feeling too weary and battered even to light the lamp. He lifted himself enough to raise the window, and called out "Hello!" to Wells, who was shouting at him from the walk below.

"I just wanted to know if you were there. I'm coming up."

Durham got up, with a sigh that was half groan, and lighted the lamp on his desk. He was back on the window seat again when Wells blew into the room, panting from his run up the stairs.

"What's the matter?" he asked, looking down at Durham. "You look as though you'd been through a couple dozen battles." A large piece of court-plaster formed a crisscross over the bridge of Durham's nose, and his chin was scratched and swollen.

"No, it was only one," he answered, painfully adjusting a pillow behind his head. "We had a

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scrimmage this afternoon that *was* a scrimmage, and they made a battering ram and a punching bag and several kinds of a door mat of me. I feel as though every bone in my body had been split in two and then stuck together again every which way."

Wells laughed and patted Durham's shoulder. "Poor Bull! Did you rage and bellow and show 'em you wouldn't be abused?"

"I got sore after a while. I guess anybody would. What are you feeling so hilarious about?"

Wells drew a letter from his pocket and took from it a check. "Wouldn't that make any pauperized mortal hilarious?" he cried, waving the check before Durham's face. "That precious father of mine is so tickled over my being elected class president that he sent me this—twenty-five golden samoleums! 'Take it and celebrate,' he says. 'Such honors come to a man only too rarely, and I know you will want to do something for your friends in recognition of it.' Poor old dad! I think he fully expects I'll be president of the United States some day. He hadn't any business to send me this—dad needs about all of his spare pennies—so I'm not going to blow it all in, but we'll have a good feed up here, and when I write him about it he'll think it was as good as a Roman triumph." Wells was smiling, but his eyes shone with something suspiciously like tears. "You're on, aren't you?"

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"Sure!" Durham attempted a grin, though the effort hurt him. The effect on his swollen and battered face was so comical that Wells burst into a laugh.

"Don't, if it hurts so," he said. "Get your plugging done if you've got any to do, and work up an appetite. I'm going down to Mrs. Polly's and collect the grub. Round up the fellows when they come in, will you?—Butt and Husky and Grey, and"—he stopped at the door. "I guess we'd better send over for Hall, too. We don't want to be too exclusive."

Left alone, Durham got doggedly at his book, though he was sore and aching in every muscle. The afternoon's football practice had been unusually strenuous for him, for without knowing it he had been the victim of a little conspiracy on the part of the 'Varsity men. Some of them had been of the opinion that Durham would never be a good football player, anyway—he was too slow and easy-going, and others said he would be all right if he ever got mad enough. So to decide it they set about systematically to get him "mad." He was sent into the thick of every play, and pummelled and thumped in a fashion that would have disqualified every man on the opposing side if it had been a real game. It accomplished its object—Durham had to quit or scrap, if there was any scrap in him. He did not

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quit, and when the coach saw the red gleam in his eye and the set of his jaw as he plowed his way into the mass plays, he smiled significantly at the captain and nodded "He'll do." Durham was not the only man on the squad who felt lame that night.

Presently Butt and Hawkins came in, carrying on an arguing and wrangling which they kept up after they had lighted the fire and settled down in front of it.

"What's the fight?" asked Durham after five minutes of vain attempt to study.

"This nonsense about fraternities," grumbled Hawkins. "All this secrecy and mystery makes me tired. The fraternities are here, and why in thunder shouldn't we talk about them if we want to?"

"Husky went up to Dayton to-night—Dayton, a senior, mind you!—and asked him when initiation was coming. He got sat on good and hard," Butt explained.

"It's all tommyrot! Here they were running their heads off for us when we first came, and now they don't take any more notice of us than if we didn't exist. 'Oh, come down to the house as much as you can—make it your home,' they used to say; and now if we go near 'em we get a freeze-out that's worse than kicking us out the door. I haven't dared to go near the house for a week, and I'm getting good and sick of it."

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"That doesn't do any good," said Butt. "I don't see myself why it's any sin to talk about fraternities—I suppose they do after you really get into them. Initiation must be coming on before very long now—I know it's before Thanksgiving, anyway. Donnel gave me a little hint the other day about doing what I was told without any questions, no matter how queer it seemed, so I'm pretty sure it won't do any good to get sore."

"If we've got to go through a lot of hokus-pokus with ghostly green lights and skulls and riding goats, I don't think much of it. I had enough of that in Prep. school."

"Oh, you'll take what the rest of us do, and not say a word!" said Durham. "I hope there won't be much to take, though. I can't spare the time."

"If you don't look out, Bull, you'll be graduating with honors. You're getting to be a regular grind. It's really somebody's duty to break in once in a while to save you from yourself."

"Now, you know——"

"Did you see the Bull in action to-day?" interrupted Hawkins. "He's been deceiving us all along. He's got a sleeping devil in him, and he let it loose this afternoon, with the result that he's sure of a place on the team. And we've been thinking he was a meek and gentle thing! Why, we might

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have roused that demon and got slaughtered, some time, just out of ignorance. You're a base hypocrite, Durham, but you can play football."

Durham got red, and looked pleased and ashamed at the same time. "I was so sore I didn't know whether I was playing football or not. And I've got to get this lesson done. Wells is going to have a little blow-out later, and that'll mean no more studying to-night."

Hawkins refused to study, but sat sprawled out in front of the fire, breaking into speech now and then as the spirit moved him. Butt got out his book and divided his attention between its contents and Hawkins's occasional remarks. About nine o'clock Wells came in and announced that the feast was ready.

"Couldn't you get anybody else?" he asked Durham.

"I clean forgot it," said Durham. "I'll run over and get Hall and Randall now."

"Oh, no; do it myself! You've had enough exercise for to-day," and Wells was off to recruit his company.

Grey was laying forth the feast on a table and the top of a trunk when the delegation from 32 entered the room. Wells was back almost immediately, bringing four other fellows and an armful of steins he had collected. Hall and Randall came a

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bit reluctantly, for they had a feeling that after having electioneered so actively against Wells, it was not just the thing to be accepting his present hospitality. But Wells soon put them at ease. He displayed his sandwiches and cider as grandly as if it had been a banquet, inviting everybody to pitch in.

"This is on father," he explained. "You see, he's rather set up over having a class president for a son, and as you fellows are to blame, this is really your treat as much as mine. There's ice cream and a lot of Mrs. Polly's cake things over in that box."

"Here's to Mr. Wells—may he do this four years in succession!" cried Butt, lifting his stein, which Grey had filled with cider. Wells smiled happily as the toast was drunk.

"I wish he was here to celebrate with us," he said. "He's going to get up some time, and I want him to know you fellows. You'll like him, for he isn't a bad sort, even if he is so foolish over his one chick."

"Golly!" Durham was investigating the box in the corner. "Do you suppose it would be breaking training to eat this? Because I'm going to."

"Wells, if the careers of two budding young athletes are spoiled by this debauch, you're to blame. And if you don't hide that box of cigarettes——"

"Well, if you aren't a bunch of tight-wads!"

The hall door had opened and McCarthy stood

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looking in, a pleased smile breaking through his scowl of mock indignation. For a moment there was an awkward pause. In view of McCarthy's tactics on election night, he was not exactly a welcome guest on this particular occasion. Then Wells remembered himself.

"Oh, come in, McCarthy! We're just having a little feed. Help yourself."

Hawkins was on the point of saying something about "butters-in," but after all it was Wells's picnic, not his. He selected a huge wedge of cake with the muttered reflection that Wells was too good-natured for his own welfare, to which those who heard him silently agreed. McCarthy, meanwhile, helped himself serenely, apparently unconscious that his arrival was not the most opportune thing that could have happened.

"Quite a lay out," he remarked. "Somebody's birthday?"

"Oh, no—nobody's birthday," Hawkins could not resist answering. "We're just holding a little Thanksgiving party in honor of our president."

McCarthy could not fail to see the little sting behind the words. He stood for an instant with a mouthful half way to his mouth, his face flushing. Then he laughed.

"I suppose that's a knock at me," he said, biting into the cake. "Well, I meant what I said. I

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didn't have anything against you, Wells, but I did want to see Butt elected. I hope there's no hard feeling."

"Of course there isn't," said Wells, a little ashamed that they had received McCarthy so grudgingly. "Who said anything about hard feeling?"

"Nobody—only I wasn't born yesterday afternoon. This is good grub, though," and McCarthy evidently decided to swallow Hawkins's little gibe with the cake, for he helped himself to another piece as complacently as if he had been given a rousing welcome instead of a snub. His manner, even if it was "nervy," had the effect of removing what awkwardness there might have been in the situation, and the festive air which his coming had interrupted soon held sway again. Grey got out his banjo and started a song.

Under cover of the singing McCarthy drew Butt aside.

"Have you heard anything?" he asked, his face beaming with suppressed news.

"What about?"

"Frats. You haven't, have you? Well, there are things doing. I can't tell you what, but there are things doing."

Butt could not see just how McCarthy was in a position to know that there were "things doing" for Kappa Chi men. In fact, he had imbibed

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enough of the Tresham feeling of reticence regarding fraternities to resent being told such a thing by McCarthy, who belonged to another crowd. He was sure Wells or Hall wouldn't have spoken in just that way.

"How do you know?" he asked.

"I can't tell that, either—but you'll find out. They're really started."

The others were singing an old camp-meeting song Grey had been teaching them, and Butt moved back to join them.

"'Brother Durham, whar was you?'"

Grey sang, plunking away at the banjo and stamping time with one foot.

"'Brother Durham, whar was you?
Brother Durham, whar was you,
When de Lord was passin' by?'"

Then they all took up the chorus:

"'Oh, he's been yere, been yere,
Bless ma soul and gone.
He's been yere, been yere,
And gone to Gallilee.'"

They sang a verse for every man in the room, and their demand to know where "Brother Hawkins" had been was so loud they did not hear a

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sharp rapping at the door, until a thundering "Bang!" at the end of the chorus made everybody stop.

"Who is it?" cried Wells.

"Freshman Chanler!" called a voice from the hall.

"Come on in!"

"Freshman Chanler!" repeated the voice. There was no need of McCarthy's wink to tell Butt what was afoot. The same thought—"fraternity business"—came at once to him and to everyone else in the room.

"What is it?" he asked, raising his voice.

"Advance into the hall!"

He stepped into the hall, closing the door after him. The gas had been turned out, leaving everything in absolute darkness except where the faint blue-gray of outdoors showed through the window at the far end. He could see no one, but he felt that there were several persons standing near him.

"Freshman Chanler, hold out your hand!" The voice was deep and gruff, plainly disguised. It told him nothing of the speaker's identity. He held out his hand, and after a moment, in which he knew some one was groping for it, he felt a little roll of paper thrust into it.

"Conceal that which I am giving you," the voice went on. "Open it in secret, and let no eye

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but your own look upon what it contains. Obey that which it commands, even to the last letter. Fail not."

Butt put the paper into the inside pocket of his coat and stood waiting. Then he was taken by the arm and led into a corner.

"Close your eyes!" He obeyed, though with them open it was too dark to recognize anybody. "You will stand here until you hear the clock strike ten. Speak no word of this, even to your dearest friend. Disobey at your peril. Farewell!"

Butt wondered what peril there could possibly be, but he remembered Donnel's word of advice. Well, he would play his part of the game, too, if it was a game. Standing, with tightly shut eyes, he could hear cautious feet feeling their way down the stairs. They had hardly reached the bottom when the clang of the chapel clock sounded the first stroke of ten. The footsteps quickened, and he heard the outer door slam. He groped his way to Wells's door and opened it.

"Well?" They were looking up questioningly, and Hawkins's interrogation spoke for them all.

Butt flushed. "It was just a little private matter," he said, a bit awkwardly. An embarrassed pause followed, which Grey broke by starting up: "Brother Chanler, whar was you?" Everybody joined in with a laugh.

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"Didn't I tell you?" whispered McCarthy, and again Butt wondered how he could possibly have known that Kappa Chi was starting its initiation business.

The party soon broke up, for Durham and Hawkins were supposed to be in bed at ten o'clock. Hawkins went at once up to his own room, for he was looking for a visitation such as Butt had had, and Durham hung about aimlessly for a while with the same expectation. He said nothing at first, but Butt knew what was on his mind.

"Don't you suppose we both get the same thing?" Durham asked at length. "We're both in the same boat."

"I guess so," said Butt. He could see no reason why he should not tell Durham all about it—it was all in the family, in a sense—but the orders had been explicit. After a time Durham's hard afternoon had its effect, and getting too tired even to be curious, he went to bed. Left alone, Butt locked the door and slowly unrolled the mysterious paper.

It was made of two sheets—the kind freshmen wrote their themes on—stuck together, end to end. The first half was covered with Greek. Butt tried to translate the first sentence, then skipped on to the English at the bottom of the page. It was printed in sprawling capitals, and read:

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"SUCH ARE THE SECRET AND SACRED COMMANDS, WRITTEN IN THE WORDS OF THE ANCIENTS FROM WHOM THEY HAVE COME DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES, HANDED FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION AS AN INVIOABLE TRUST UNTO THE CHOSEN OF OUR GLORIOUS ORDER. TO THEE THEY ARE GIVEN, AS THE FIRST TEST OF THY FITNESS TO BE OF OUR NUMBER, TO INTERPRET AND FULFILL. TO-MORROW NIGHT, AT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT, THOU SHALT BE WAITING, BLINDFOLDED, SEATED ON THE STONE WHICH IS AT THE CORNER WHERE THE ROAD FROM THE WEST END OF THE CAMPUS TURNS SOUTHWARD. THERE WILT THOU BE MET, AND THERE AN ACCOUNT WILL BE DEMANDED OF THEE. SEE TO IT THAT THOU FALLEST SHORT IN NO PARTICULAR, FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR ORDER ARE RIGID AND IN NO WAY TO BE DISOBEYED. FAREWELL."

Butt sat down at his desk with the paper spread out before him. A second time he read those words, and their tone of mystery sent a little thrill of excitement through him. Then he got out his lexicon and started confidently to translate the Greek. Three years of it in high school had made him as proficient as anyone could reasonably expect a freshman to be, but at the end of half an hour he had only reached the middle of the second sentence. And what sentences! He had written down his translation, word

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by word, but it was no nearer to conveying any meaning than before he had started. "Of men all horses went down and five parasangs is and of horses to or for the king and because with the aid of the fugitives." That was the best he could make of it, though he consulted the dictionary and grammar on every word, and he was sure he had made no mistake. Perhaps it was one of those obscure sentences that would be made plain by what came after. He skipped to the middle of the paragraph.

After a while the sputtering of his lamp wick told him the oil was burned out. He lighted Durham's lamp and started again. It was disheartening work. Every word meant a laborious search, and when at the end he wrote down its meaning, sure that he had done his best, it stared at him as empty of significance as if it had been so much Chinese. At three o'clock in the morning he got up wearily and closed his books. The thing was done, as well as he could do it, and for all he could see it was sheer nonsense. He was too tired and discouraged to wonder what the penalty of his failure would be, and crept into bed with a half-hearted hope that the puzzle would somehow clear itself up in the morning.

But morning found the muddle as bad as ever. Butt arose, hollow-eyed and unrested after barely three hours of sleep, to tackle the baffling pas-

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sage again. As soon as he heard Durham stirring he hid it away, and pretended to be doing his geometry. Durham got up so full of his own aches and pains that he did not notice Butt's downcast air, much to Butt's relief, but coming out of chapel Donnel spoke of it.

"You're looking sort of all in, Chanler. Anything wrong?" he asked.

Donnel might or might not have been one of those silent figures in the dark hall the night before, but at any rate he knew what was the matter, and Butt felt that it was rather rubbing it in for him to come around with that innocent, sympathizing tone and ask if anything were wrong. He did his best to look bright and cheerful as he answered: "Oh, no—nothing at all."

During the spare hours of the morning he tried to twist those refractory sentences into something intelligible, but the task was pretty hopeless. In the afternoon he went to the library and retired to a secluded corner among the stacks, armed with the huge library lexicon. He thought his own might not have been complete enough. There he labored till supper time, uninterrupted, except once when McCarthy came suddenly upon him. McCarthy was strangely unlike himself, though Butt was too preoccupied to notice it or to wonder why he was not at baseball practice. His face wore a wild and

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troubled look, and he retreated precipitately when he saw whom he had come upon. As the chapel clock struck six Butt wearily took his lexicon back to its place on the shelf. He had done what he could—by translating freely and shifting many words he had evolved something that might sound well enough if one did not stop to think what it meant. But as for “secret and sacred commands”—there was nothing in it he could possibly obey or disobey. He would simply have to present himself at the appointed time, and, if he had bungled, take the consequences.

The evening passed dismally. Hawkins had “got his,” as he said, in practice that afternoon. He complained loudly that there was a plot afoot to slaughter the green men, just to see if they were slaughterable, and Durham mournfully agreed. They were curious, too, about why Butt had been so mysteriously called into the hall the night before, and puzzled because nothing had happened to themselves. It gave them a little feeling of grievance that Butt had offered no information, but they asked no questions, contenting themselves by being generally irritable. Butt sat silent at his desk, pretending to study, but between his eyes and the book danced that horrible paragraph of Greek. He could think of nothing but that, and what was coming at twelve o'clock.

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After the others had gone to bed he still sat there. Gradually the effect of the day's worry and last night's sleeplessness overcame him. His head nodded, fell finally upon his arms, and he slept.

It was the clock striking that brought him to his feet. For an instant he stood dazed, then, blowing out his lamp, he raced bareheaded down the stairs, across the campus, and down the road to the stone where he was to wait. He could see plainly enough—the moon, close upon the last quarter, had just risen—and no one seemed to be around. He sat down and tied his handkerchief tightly over his eyes.

The minutes dragged themselves slowly by. The nights were getting cold, and he shivered, for he had not thought to dress himself warmly. Yet no one came. What if they had been there and gone? He had disobeyed one order—he had not been there at five minutes before twelve. Had that condemned him at the very outset? Yet he continued to sit there, getting more chilled every minute. He did not dare get up and move about to keep warm—the orders had plainly said he was to be “waiting—seated.”

After an interminable while he heard the clock strike again. One o'clock! He started to get up; there was no need of waiting any longer. But the clock went on striking, twelve long, slow strokes. He sank back with a long breath of relief. In his

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confusion he had mistaken eleven o'clock for midnight.

The sound of the last clang still hung in the air when he heard footsteps. They came up rapidly and stopped beside him.

"Freshman Chanler, kneel!" a voice said—the deep, disguised voice of the night before. Being blindfolded he could not see the three figures standing close beside him. The voice, he thought, sounded some like Dayton's. He bent his stiffened legs and knelt on the ground.

"Repeat the sacred commands intrusted to you!"

His teeth chattering with cold and excitement, Butt began that crazy translation:

"All the men's horses descended a distance of five parasangs, for many horses were necessary to the king, with the aid of the fugitives. And after the river had been crossed two hundred wicker shields were brought by a thief with meat for them. Notwithstanding, a storm arose, and a treaty was made in like manner——"

One of the listeners moved back that Butt might not hear him chuckling.

"By George, he's made it mean something!" he whispered. "That boy's a wonder." He had some reason to admire Butt's achievement, for he had himself concocted that passage of Greek, choos-

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ing the words at random from a battered old Anabasis, with no regard whatever for their meaning.

"That's enough!" the gruff voice interrupted. "Stand up!"

Butt got to his feet, wondering what was coming. They were evidently disgusted with the exhibition he had made—they hadn't even let him finish. Some one tied his hands behind him with a rope, and then led him rapidly down the road. There a buggy awaited them. He was lifted into the narrow place behind the seat and squeezed in, with his feet left hanging down behind. Some one else already occupied half the space, and the two made a tight fit. He wondered who he was rubbing shoulders with. Could it be Grey? It wasn't big enough for Hawkins or Durham.

The buggy turned with a raspy cranking of the wheels, and started, rattling over the road as they whipped the horse into a run. With one eye he could just see out under his blindfold, but it did him little good. He was wedged in so tightly, his knees almost touching his chin, that he could not turn his head, and only a tiny bit of road met his sight, gray in the moonlight, skimming continually out from under the flying wheels. He was cramped and uncomfortable with his wrists bound together behind him, and every bump and stone they went over gave him a tremendous jolting. After a time

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they halted. He heard some one spring to the ground, and a scraping clatter and thud-thud as of gate bars being let down. Then they turned into what seemed to be a field, full of hummocks and hollows that nearly jounced the breath out of him. Finally they stopped.

They were evidently on the edge of some woods. The men who had ridden on the seat got out and moved about with a good deal of thrashing among bushes. Then they moved out of hearing. Butt's companion in the back of the buggy started an experimental wriggling about.

"Do you know where we are?" he whispered softly—so softly that Butt could not recognize the voice. It might have been Grey's or anybody else's.

"Silence!" Some one, apparently, was on guard, and the stern command put an end to any attempt to talk the matter over on the part of the two freshmen.

Presently the others came back and Butt was yanked unceremoniously to the ground. He was led into the woods, stumbling and tripping over bushes and underbrush, and only saved from falling by the tight hold his conductor kept on his arm. At length he was halted and stood against a tree. The man who had led him tightened his blindfold and left him.

It was very still. A low and steady trickling,

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like water running, far away, was all he heard for some moments, then the rustling of footsteps in the undergrowth told him he had not been left alone. The sharp sound of branches being broken, the scratching of a match, and the snap and crackle of dry wood and leaves ablaze meant they were starting a fire.

Suddenly strange and unearthly noises began to fill the woods. First a weird, rasping sound that set one's teeth on edge, as of a nail point being scraped slowly on iron, then hollow groans. A piercing scream, uttered almost in Butt's ear, made him jump as if struck. It rose to a wild shriek, then slowly died down to a dismal wail. The groans became louder.

Butt was startled for a moment until he recalled his initiation into a high-school fraternity. That had abounded in just such manifestations as these. He was rather disappointed that Kappa Chi should be doing nothing but the same old things. He had expected that if there were to be horrors they would at least be of a more impressive kind.

Gradually the makers of the various noises—there were only three really—came together a few feet away and became quiet. Then one of them spoke—he of the deepened voice, which sounded more familiar every time Butt heard it, though still he could not place its owner. The other freshman was evidently to be the first victim.

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"Freshman," the voice said, "the hour of trial has come. It will require that your body be prepared to suffer keenest torture and your soul ready to taste even of death itself. If you flinch or show fear, you are lost, for only those who endure the test bravely are deemed worthy to enter the ancient order of the I Eata Pi brotherhood."

I Eata Pi! Butt pricked up his ears, suddenly suspicious.

"Before you is the sacred fire," the voice continued. "From it you must pluck the mystic emblem of our order. Reach out—if you are worthy the spirit will guide your hand even though you cannot see."

A pause, long and tense. Butt strove to dislodge his blindfold by rubbing it against the tree, but it was too carefully tied.

"Ow! Your old spirit is a fake! Quit it—quit it, I tell you!"

McCarthy's voice! Butt was struggling with the rope that bound his hands together. It was all a trick!—McCarthy had no place in a Kappa Chi initiation. The rope was not tied very securely—they had not counted on his trying to get away. In a moment his hands were free and he had lifted the blindfold from his eyes.

Twenty feet away a fire was burning on the ground. Before it stood three figures, their faces

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covered with black cloths for masks, holding McCarthy by the arms. McCarthy, still blindfolded, was trying desperately to get free. Butt sprang forward to help him. Before he could reach them McCarthy's wild struggling succeeded in loosening one arm, with a violence that nearly landed him in the fire.

"Look out, you fool! Do you want to get burned?"

There was no attempt to disguise the voice this time. Butt recognized it even before he reached out and snatched the mask from the speaker's face. It was Timothy Doughton. He turned on Butt with a cry that was like a snarl. "What do you think you're doing?"

They had forgotten Butt in their difficulties with McCarthy, and his sudden appearance in their midst created enough diversion to let Mac throw off his blindfold. The other two unmasked at the same time. They were fellows whom Butt knew by sight as sophomores. The five stood glaring at one another.

"What do you think you're doing?" repeated Timothy angrily.

Butt drew a long breath. If there was to be a fight he was ready for it, with McCarthy to help him. Timothy had fooled him, but he could not bully him, and the other two did not look like scrappers.

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"What do you think I'm doing? You worked a pretty clever trick, you and your I Eata Pi fraternity! I bit, in good shape. But this is the end of it. Where are we?"

Timothy laughed. "You'd like to know, wouldn't you? Well, you'll probably find out in the morning, if not before."

"I guess we'll find out before, unless you're planning to stay out here all night."

"Oh, no! We hadn't been entertaining any such plan at all. But that won't affect you, that I can see."

During this little wrangle McCarthy, struck with a scheme, had stepped back and was wildly signaling to Butt. Suddenly he sprang forward and began kicking vigorously at the fire, scattering the embers broadcast among the dry leaves that covered the ground. They burst into flame in a dozen places.

"Stop that! Do you want to set the woods afire?"

"It's your fire—you can put it out," cried McCarthy, darting into the woods, Butt after him. "I don't know where we're going, but we'll get out somewhere."

"Tim's coming after us," said Butt, looking back. "The team must be this way."

Sure enough, Tim was leaving his companions to extinguish the fire the best they could and was

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making after them. They soon reached the edge of the field, and there was the buggy, almost where they came out. They tumbled into it, and Butt whipped up the horse, trusting its instinct to lead them home.

"Here, wait!" shouted Timothy, emerging from the woods.

"Oh, you go to thunder!" Butt called back, lashing the horse with the end of the reins. But Timothy's long legs served him well, and he overtook them as they were passing through the gap in the fence into the road. He clambered into the back of the buggy, panting.

"That's a nice way to leave your pals!" uttered McCarthy scornfully. Timothy was busy catching his breath, and made no answer.

"I think you ought to stay and keep them company on the way home," said Butt, reining in the horse, which was headed for home and anxious to get there.

"Sure—hop out and try walking," supplemented McCarthy. "Get!"

"Look here—you aren't sore, are you?" Timothy seemed more anxious to propitiate McCarthy than to avoid walking.

"Yes, I am—good and sore! What did you want to go playing any such fool game as this for? I won't stand for it."

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"Well, I didn't want to bring you into it, but Tom and Jo insisted. They said you needed it. It was only fun, anyway."

"You had a pretty good time out of it, didn't you? Well, get out and have some more—walking." He reached back and started to push Timothy out of the buggy.

That was too much, for all Timothy's eagerness to settle things peaceably. "Come on, that's going a little too far for you!" he cried. "I won't stand it."

"I don't see how you're going to help it." McCarthy pushed harder.

"Let go, or I'll show you! I'll have you sent home packing, so quick you won't know what's struck you."

"Go ahead—I'd like to see how you'd do it."

"I can do it. Do you suppose old Johnson would go on putting up for your college expenses if he knew all about you? I'll tell him."

"All right. Perhaps old Johnson wouldn't have a few things to say to you—but perhaps he would."

"Humph! How old do you think I am? If I told him I had only just found it out, do you think he'd believe you if you denied it?"

"Well, go ahead, I say—and good luck to your old ball team."

McCarthy's bravado had faced down Timothy's

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bluster. "I don't want to go ahead unless you get so confounded fresh that you force me to," Timothy said.

"Fresh or not, you're going to walk home!" and McCarthy stood up to use force if necessary.

"What's the use? We're 'most there, and Tim might as well put the horse up," Butt cut in dryly. In the heat of their quarrel they had forgotten his presence, and they both became suddenly silent when he spoke, each trying to recall just how much he had said that he shouldn't have. Timothy spent an unhappy five minutes in desperate thinking, then he made his attempt to patch up whatever unfortunate breaks he had made.

"I guess the bluff worked, didn't it?" he said, with rather shaky raillery. "I got my ride and you really swallowed all that hot air. You are easy, Mac."

But McCarthy did not respond to the cue. It was too miserably transparent, even if he had had the heart to carry it out, which he had not. He did not like deliberately lying to Butt.

"Don't bother to smooth things over," said Butt coldly. "It only makes a worse mess of them. I think I'll get out here."

They had reached the town, and Butt stopped the horse within a few minutes' walk of the campus. He got out and left them without a word of good-night.

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So there was something wrong with McCarthy, after all! Something Tim was a partner in. He had held out against Hawkins's assertions and his own suspicions as long as he could. There was no use in it any more. What the trouble was he was too tired and disappointed to wonder. He felt sick of everything and everybody, and he crawled into bed almost wishing he had never come to college at all.

CHAPTER IX

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ONE thing he was glad of—for two days McCarthy stayed religiously away from 32 North. Butt rather dreaded the explanations he felt Mac would try to make, much as he wished to hear them. Hawkins attributed his staying away to the initiation, which Butt had told them about. “Good effects, for which you ought to have been willing to translate a whole bookful of Greek,” he told Butt. “I’d have helped you.” Rather to his surprise, Butt had no retort to make.

Then one morning, when he knew he was likely to find Butt alone, McCarthy came into the room. He walked straight up to the chair in which Butt was sitting.

“Tim says I’ve queered myself with you for good,” he said abruptly. “Have I?”

Butt flushed with annoyance. No matter how he felt toward McCarthy it was none of Timothy’s business.

“Tim seems to know a good deal for one ordinary mortal,” he answered shortly.

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"That's what he said, anyway, and I thought it might be so—you are sort of strict about some things. But I've been thinking about it, and if you haven't got any more use for me I wanted to hear you say so yourself."

Butt turned uncomfortably in his chair. "What's the good of talking about it?" he asked at length.

"Perhaps there isn't any. But I—it seems sort of silly, I guess, but I didn't mix very well with the fellows when I first struck here. A lot of 'em think I'm no good yet; but you've been white to me right along, and I didn't want to think you'd changed just on Tim Doughton's say-so." It was not easy for McCarthy to say that—it was virtually coming to Butt and pleading for his friendship, a kind of thing he had never thought possible to do with anybody, and Butt's evasive manner had not made it any easier.

Butt got to his feet, eager to explain his point of view, yet uncertain how to put it into words. This frank discussion of feelings was as hard for him as it was for McCarthy.

"Tim Doughton's a—an old crook!" he burst out. "I always knew he was a pretty poor sort, but I thought he was too harmless to be downright crooked. I've seen differently since I got here, though. And when a fellow like him has such a hold on you that he can get you fired out of college,

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how can I help thinking that things aren't just right?"

"Oh, he won't do that! He won't dare to."

"But that doesn't help any—don't you see? It only makes it all the worse."

"Why does it? Besides, he couldn't get me fired from college, anyway. All he could do would be to get old Johnson to stop putting up the money for me, then I'd have to leave, of course. I haven't got enough money to go through college myself."

"Who is old Johnson, anyway? Some friend of Tim's?"

"I should say not! Don't you know—the Johnson, the old guy that's so nutty over athletics? He's rotten with money, and Tim got him to fork over some for me."

"But I supposed you had a scholarship."

"I was going to have—Tim was going to fix it up; then he said this was easier. But he told me to keep mum about myself—Johnson's a particular old duck, and he wouldn't give me a cent if he found out I was a pro."

"A pro?" Butt echoed.

"Yes, I've played ball for money—earned my living that way. But Tim told me not to tell a soul. They don't stand for a fellow's earning money that way if he wants to play on a college team."

Butt grinned—a broad, beaming grin of relief.

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So that was McCarthy's terrible crime! Remembering the matter of the trophy cups, which he had never been able to explain satisfactorily to himself, he had been imagining all sorts of heinous things, in which theft and other vague iniquities figured largely. He knew next to nothing of the collegiate amateur's profound horror of professionalism, and still less about professional baseball. He reached forward impulsively and clapped his hands on McCarthy's shoulders.

"Is that all?" he cried.

"I guess it would be enough if Tim wanted to be nasty and wasn't afraid. The trouble is, he knew about me all the time, so he can't say anything."

"But it was honest, wasn't it—earning money that way?"

"Sure, every cent. It came easy sometimes, but I guess I earned it all."

Butt laughed—a whole-hearted laugh of joy. "I guess I'm a fool," he said. "You and Tim said just enough the other night to make me think you were mixed up in something pretty dreadful. What do you let him bully you so for?"

McCarthy was all a-smile, too. Tim had filled him full of tales about how disgusted everybody would be with him if they found out he had played professional baseball, which, in his ignorance of col-

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lege standards, he had believed implicitly. It was a tremendous relief to find Butt taking it this way.

"You noticed he didn't bully me much," he said.

"I know, but he tried to. Why don't you tell him to tell all he knows and go to thunder?"

"I'd be in a pretty mess if he did, wouldn't I? I couldn't play on the team, and no money to stay in college with— You don't know, Butt, the kind of things I'd have to go back to if I quit college."

"Oh, you could play on the team all right! I don't think that would make any difference. And there are lots of ways of getting money." Which shows that Butt had pretty small knowledge of what he was talking about.

"I don't know about that," said McCarthy dubiously. He knew a bit more. "I don't want to risk it, anyway. You won't say anything about it, will you?"

"Of course not. But let's not bother about it any more now. I know we can think up something. I hate to see you depending on Tim Doughton for anything. Come on, there's time to go uptown and get a soda before math." And uptown they went, and drank to the confusion of Timothy in an ice-cream soda at the drug store.

Timothy Doughton, meanwhile, was learning what it is to be torn between two conflicting desires. In his eyes the next best thing to being on an ath-

letic team was being manager of one, and as he was not cut out for anything more vigorous than tennis, the chief ambition of his college course was to become manager of the 'Varsity baseball nine. In the competition that was the basis on which the managers were elected, he was working for all there was in him—and it must be said for him that Timothy could work hard and to good purpose when he had an object in view. But there were five other competitors working just as hard, and as the work was divided so as to give each one an equal show, there was little chance for him to gain any appreciable advantage over them. During his freshman year he had already made up his mind to enter the competition, and thus early he began to observe what methods were likeliest to succeed. As a result he decided that the thing to do was to stand in with the baseball men—the coach, the manager, and the players. Their voice had a good deal of influence with the votes of the other fellows. He also decided that one of the best ways to win their favor would be to induce some star baseball man to come to Tresham; if he could do it with some one headed for another college, all the better. With that in mind he had found McCarthy—a “kid,” everyone called him, of barely seventeen, but already the best pitcher in the little confederation of New York and New Jersey teams in which he played. McCarthy

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really wanted to get an education—he was going to college, anyway, as soon as he had worked a year or two and saved up some money—and as Timothy was the first college emissary to approach him, there was little difficulty, with promises of scholarships and free tuition, in persuading him to go to Tresham.

Thus far everything had gone very well indeed. His discovery that old Mr. Johnson, in addition to his larger benefactions, often secretly helped to defray the college expenses of worthy athletes in search of an education, made it unnecessary for him to apply to the college for a scholarship, and at the same time it made McCarthy directly dependent upon him. All this had called for a good deal of diplomacy, for not only did the old gentleman require to be told a very carefully prepared story—he was a great stickler for “amateur standing in college athletics”—but McCarthy himself had to be convinced that to take money in this way was no more than what scores of others were doing, and nothing his pride need rebel against at all. Altogether, Timothy had to do a good deal of juggling with the truth, but he considered that the end to be gained justified it.

Now, in the face of all he had so successfully accomplished, he was suddenly convinced he must do something to curb McCarthy's arrogant independence. It was very troublesome. He could not

afford to antagonize the fellow on whom he placed his chief hopes of being considered a wide-awake and hustling business manager, but after McCarthy's defiant attitude of the other night he felt he must contrive some means of showing that impudent freshman he could not have things all his own way.

Such means were not very hard to find, especially as Timothy was manager of the sophomore team. After practice on Thursday afternoon, the sophomore captain, at Timothy's instigation, informed Rowland, the freshman captain, that McCarthy would be debarred from playing in the game by the fact that he had two entrance conditions.

"I'm mighty sorry," the sophomore said, quite as if he meant it. "But it's a faculty rule. You'll find it in the catalogue."

All of which was true, and though Rowland protested and McCarthy swore, the truth of it remained unaltered. And no one thought of blaming Timothy. The wrath of the team, and of the class when they heard about it, was directed wholly against the faculty for having made such an abominable regulation. As a matter of fact, the rule was meant to apply to the freshman team when it started to play its regular schedule of games with other colleges in the spring; no one had ever before interpreted it as bearing on the fall game with the sophomores, and never before had anyone bothered to

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inquire into the scholastic standing of the freshmen players. But there the rule was, stating plainly that "a freshman with more than one condition against his name in the books of the registrar is not eligible to the freshman baseball team," and Noughty-Odd, if they chose to, could insist on its being enforced.

McCarthy was furious, and in a way he was right in contending that he had not been treated fairly; it was a sneaky trick of the sophomores to make their protest at the last minute, when it was too late to do anything; he should have been warned sooner. In certain respects his case was peculiar. He had entered college several days after entrance examinations were over, on a certificate from a high school in Brooklyn covering all but two of the required subjects. His excellent marks in high school, as vouched for by this certificate, were enough to admit him without question, with the privilege of taking the two examinations necessary as soon as he was ready, provided that should be within a reasonable time; but until these examinations were passed he had two conditions against him. He only needed to do some reading in English and reviewing in French to be quite prepared for them—work that he could easily cover in less than two weeks; if it had been anything more serious Timothy would long since have had him hard at it, for there must be no danger of being debarred when the regular

baseball season came around. But here it was Thursday, the game was coming Saturday, and the whole thing fitted beautifully into Timothy's scheme of discipline.

McCarthy took his grievance to Butt. Thirty-two North sympathized as one man, even Hawkins admitting that there was a grievance, though he looked with disapproval on McCarthy's return to his former footing of familiarity.

"What can you expect of a team that'll have that man Doughton for a manager?" he said disgustedly. "He'd have debarred freshmen from the flag rush if he could, and it wouldn't have been any more senseless than this is. It's a wonder they didn't wait till the game was called before they sprung their old protest."

"They might as well have—it wouldn't have been any worse," replied McCarthy despondently.

"What have you got conditions in?" asked Butt.

McCarthy told him. "Now don't go and say I can get 'em off before Saturday," he added. "I've thought of that, and I can't do it."

"Sure you can—the English one, anyway, and that'll be enough. It's easy, and all you'll have to do is read up the books."

"Yes—about forty of them! And you have to know 'em when you've read 'em."

"Oh, no, there are only about— Where's a

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catalogue?" He fished a catalogue out of the drawer of his desk. "Here! One, two—there are only nineteen things to read, and some of us ought to have notes on them. We'll all help you."

McCarthy was skeptical, but Butt insisted, and in the end McCarthy agreed to try. He might be able to do it—he had the kind of mind that grasps things quickly and remembers easily, which accounted for the excellent marks on his certificate and the ease with which he had kept up in his college work apparently without studying at all. The worst of it all was that it was "literature," something he had avoided all his life—that was the reason he had entered college deficient in English—and here was more of it to be tackled all in a lump than he had met with before in his whole school career. He retired to the solitude of his own room, laden with a little pile of "masterpieces" that made his heart sink, while Butt set about hunting up some notebooks.

He lighted his pipe, selected the smallest book from the pile, and started in. The book happened to be poetry, of a kind McCarthy wasn't used to. At the end of half an hour he was ready to heave the volume out the window, when there occurred the one thing needed to goad him on. Timothy Dough-ton came into the room.

One of the unfortunate things about Timothy

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was that he never knew when to leave well enough alone. Having successfully eliminated McCarthy from the coming contest without appearing to have had any hand in it at all, he could not forego dropping in to see how the disappointed one was taking it. He expected to find him angry and rebellious, and was prepared to speak consoling words. He could afford to do that.

"Hello, Mac! Doing a little plugging?" he questioned with cordial interest.

McCarthy had picked up "The Princess" again. He might as well put up a bluff to Timothy, anyway.

"Oh, just a bit of reviewing! I've got to get off a little condition before Saturday, and I thought I'd brush up a trifle before the exam."

It was quite a good bluff—it surprised Timothy into forgetting himself.

"Why, you can't get off a condition before Saturday!" he exclaimed.

"Think so?"

"It's too late! There isn't time to take an exam and get it corrected, even if you were ready for it!"

Timothy's reasoning was almost too prompt—he must have thought it out before. McCarthy jumped straight at a conclusion, which happened to be a correct one, and his eyes snapped.

"That's the way you figured it out, is it? You'd

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better wait till the game's called before you do much crowing. I'm going to take that exam, and I've got to plug for it, so you might trot along and let me do it. I haven't time to be bothering with you."

So he wasn't simply reviewing, after all! He had a good, hard grind ahead of him. Timothy smiled. "I'm sure I wish you luck. I always thought that was a rather foolish rule, anyway—but I didn't make it."

McCarthy stood up, clenching his fists. "You get out, or I'll kick you out!"

To Timothy such vehemence was unmistakable evidence of anxiety, and he withdrew with a sweet "good-night," confident that the freshmen would play without their star pitcher after all.

Fifteen minutes later Butt came in, to find McCarthy in the depths of despair.

"I can't ever pass this stuff!" he exclaimed dejectedly. "I told you it was a dirty deal, and Tim Doughton's at the bottom of it."

"Nonsense! Timothy's quite a man, but he isn't making the rules of the college yet."

"They'd never have thought of raking up these conditions of mine if he hadn't put 'em up to it."

"Fool him, then! I've a lot of predigested information here," and Butt deposited an armful of notebooks on the desk. "I don't know whether it's any good or not, but we'll see. What are you reading?"

McCarthy held up the despised "Princess." "The silliest rot I ever struck!" he exclaimed disgustedly. "'Tears, idle tears!'" he repeated in a maudlin tone.

Butt laughed. "Finish it, then we'll talk it over," he said, and left the room.

Early the next morning McCarthy went to the English professor to ask for an examination, with Wells along as official pleader for the class. Mac explained about the special nature of his conditions, and then Wells graphically described the plight the freshmen would be in if McCarthy weren't allowed to play.

"I have no doubt we can arrange the examination," said the professor; "but I would like to see the Registrar about it first."

"I was to take the exams whenever I was ready—that's what they told me in September."

"You are ready for this one?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" McCarthy assured him, with more eagerness than truth.

"I shall be glad to do anything I can, and I'll let you know what that will be if you will come around this afternoon," and the professor wished them good-day.

The examination was arranged for the next morning, but McCarthy did not wait to be assured of that. He went straight to his room and began

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studying again. He cut all recitations that day, and put in such an amount of concentrated work as he had never done in his life before. Butt and the others backed him up loyally, ransacking their memories for every bit of stray knowledge that could possibly help him. At midnight he threw the books aside and stood up.

"I'm crammed full and I'm going to bed," he announced. "If I can't get through now, I never can," and he bade them good-night.

Butt was waiting for him when he came out of the examination. "How was it?" he asked eagerly.

"I don't know—honestly," and McCarthy mopped his forehead. "I wrote and wrote till my hand's all cramped, but I haven't any idea whether I really said anything or not. He promised to let me know how I came out by half-past one."

The game was to be called at two o'clock, and by a quarter before the bleachers on College Field were pretty well filled. The fall baseball game between the freshmen and sophomores could always be depended on to have interesting features, and both classes were out in full force, with a large sprinkling of juniors and seniors. The news had spread that McCarthy might be able to play after all, which added to the interest, for everyone was curious to see how the new pitcher would show up in an actual

game. The sophomores had been assured by Timothy that he couldn't possibly pass the examination—he was too utterly unprepared for it; but the freshmen had faith in their luck. They believed McCarthy would play, even if a miracle were required to accomplish it.

At two o'clock the sophomore team came out and began to warm up. McCarthy had not yet appeared, and they hooted derisively at that part of the bleachers where the freshmen were crowded together. The freshmen answered with a cheer for themselves. They were not to be daunted by anything so puerile as hoots. But as the minutes passed their confidence began to ebb. At a quarter past not one of the freshmen players had shown himself outside the locker house.

"Play ball! Play ball!" came in impatient chorus from the grand stand where the upper classmen sat.

Some sophomores started singing: "Where, oh, where, are the pea-green freshmen?" The crowd took it up with gusto, while the freshmen grinned sheepishly. Encouraged by the reception of this effort, the sophomores tried a cheer:

*"Ump—yeh-yeh! Ump—yeh-yeh!
Freshmen! Freshmen! Ump—yeh-yeh!"*

they jeered in mocking falsetto.

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Then Butt came running out from the locker house. Wells was standing in front of the bleachers to lead the cheering.

"Where's McCarthy?" he asked eagerly.

"He had to hunt up the Registrar, and he wasn't in——"

"*A-a-ay!*" A welcoming shout went up from the freshmen. Their team was just coming around the corner of the grand stand. Among the last of them trotted McCarthy. They were given a scant five minutes in which to do some warming up, then the 'Varsity captain, who was acting as umpire, called the game.

"Batteries for Noughty-Odd, Wilkins and Hayes; for Noughty-Even, McCarthy and Rowland. Batter up!"

The sophomores had taken the field, and Wilkins was tossing the ball easily to first.

"Come on, fellows!" cried Wells. "Robinson's up—give him a good yell!"

Freshman confidence was restored by the appearance of McCarthy, and they gave a lusty cheer while Robinson, the first baseman, selected his bat and advanced to the plate. A hush fell as the pitcher delivered the first ball.

"Ball—one!"

"Good eye, Robbie! Wait for him!" came from the freshmen.

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Wilkins rubbed the ball in the dirt, wiped it carefully on his pants, and swung his arm again.

"Foul—strike one!"

"He's finding him!" cried the freshmen gleefully.

Another ball, then "*A-a-ay!*" A yell of joy went up. Robinson had met the ball squarely, and it went skimming straight over the short stop's head into left field. Robinson was safe on first before the ball was fielded in.

"Got him going! Got him going!" chanted the freshmen, and gave another cheer for Robinson.

The next man sent a pop fly straight into the second baseman's hands, and freshman enthusiasm cooled. Rowland was the next batter up. He was a big, hulking fellow and seemed to puzzle the pitcher, who gave him three balls before he succeeded in getting a strike called on him. Another ball sent him to first and Robinson advanced to second.

"Come on, there, do some pitching!" cried a sophomore disgustedly.

Wilkins retrieved himself by striking the next man out. Then a wild pitch gave Robinson a chance to steal third and a single brought him home. Freshman enthusiasm was rampant now. The next man struck out, but they had scored one run.

That run gave McCarthy just the confidence he

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needed. He took his place in the box and justified his reputation by retiring the first man up with three consecutive strikes. The next two found the ball, but they could not hit it safe, and the end of the inning left the score 1 to 0 in favor of the freshmen.

Wilkins took a brace, and for a time the game promised to develop into a pitchers' battle. For three straight innings only three hits were made, and neither side could score. In the beginning of the fifth the freshmen got two more runs, and the Noughty-Odd rooters groaned. But they were roused to a pitch of enthusiasm that drowned out the freshmen completely when, in the last of the inning, McCarthy allowed a single and then a two-bagger, with no men out. He gave no more hits, but an error and a wild throw home completed the disaster, and the inning came to an end with the score a tie.

Wells was hoarse and almost purple in the face from his efforts to keep his classmates cheering. "Come on!" he yelled. "Now's the time they need it! Show 'em we're right behind 'em! One, two——"

The next three innings were give and take. Hits were few, but errors abounded. The excitement in the bleachers seemed to extend to the players, and there was a lot of wild playing. The freshmen would get a run and the sophomores would tie them

7 TO 6

again, until at the end of the eighth the score stood 6 to 6.

With the beginning of the ninth everybody was standing up. There was no more attempt at organized cheering—no one would take his eye off the game long enough to watch the cheer leaders. Sophomores and freshmen yelled as the individual spirit moved them, with the double motive of encouraging their own men and rattling the other side. Timothy Doughton, his managerial duties disposed of and the box of gate receipts under one arm, took his stand as near the coaches' line as the umpire would allow.

"Nobody comes in this time, Wilkey!" he shouted. "This is where we do it—strike 'em out!"

"Ya-ah!" yelled the freshmen as Wilkins stepped into the box again.

It was a breathless inning. The rooters forgot to root as they watched batter after batter take his stand at the plate. Wilkins was getting tired, but he braced to meet the crisis, and out of five men up he struck out three.

"That's the boy, Wilkey!" cried the sophomores. "That's the way to do it!"

"Show 'em, Mac!" shouted the freshmen.

Mac "showed 'em." With two men out he let the bases fill, and then struck out Wilkins, amidst a roar of approval. Butt was hopping excitedly about

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on the lowest seat of the bleachers. "Golly! I wouldn't have missed this game! Isn't Mac a dandy?"

"Peach! He's got the 'Varsity pinched! See how cool he is?"

"A-a-ay, Mac! Hit it out!"

McCarthy was first man up for the freshmen. The sun was dropping in the west down behind a bank of clouds. It emerged now and sent a long, slanting ray squarely into the batter's face. Mac pulled his cap down over his eyes and gripped his bat. Then he looked at Wilkins with a grin.

Wilkins had that last strike-out to avenge. His arm was stiff and tired, and for the first time in all the game the noise from the bleachers annoyed him. The hoarse shouts of the coaches, too, got on his nerves, but he resolutely shut his ears to it. He must strike out McCarthy whether the game was won or not. He nodded at the catcher's signal and delivered the ball. It was coming straight over the plate and Mac swung to meet it. Even as he swung the ball began to drop.

"Strike—one!" boomed the umpire.

Good enough! Wilkins fingered the ball almost caressingly. He had McCarthy going. He threw another drop. But this time McCarthy was on guard.

"Ball—one!"

7 TO 6

Mac pulled his cap lower over his eyes. The catcher signaled and Wilkins shook his head impatiently. He was determined to try the drop again. Again it worked.

"Strike—two!"

Wilkins smiled. He would finish McCarthy this time. He threw the ball straight over the corner of the plate. McCarthy stepped back ever so slightly and swung his bat. The ball met it and went sailing into center field, a foot over the second baseman's upstretched hand.

Back of first the coach was yelling frantically. "Get off, Mac! 'Way off! Oh, we've got him going, going! Look out! That's all right—I'll watch him. Off now!"

Robinson was at bat again. "Do it again, Robbie!" greeted him. He did it. He sent the ball in a low curve just out of the first baseman's reach, and while he trotted leisurely to first McCarthy was speeding around to third. The right fielder had recovered the ball and was throwing it in. McCarthy dived, touching the base just an instant before the ball touched him.

"How's that?" cried the third baseman, pressing the ball into McCarthy's shoulders.

"Safe."

"O-oh!" arose in protest from the disappointed sophomores. It was a close decision, but it held, and

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McCarthy got up, brushing off his shirt and grinning broadly.

The next man went out on three straight strikes, and big Rowland came up to bat. Wilkins faced him with a grim expression of determination. He twitched his head in signal to the catcher and threw the ball. Rowland squinted at it—it was coming slow and straight. He shortened his bat a trifle and bunted. The ball went rolling toward first, with Rowland lumbering along barely two feet behind it. It was Wilkins's ball and he went for it. He stooped to pick it up, directly in Rowland's path. Rowland swerved, but not enough, and fell over Wilkins's heel. Wilkins fell forward on his knee. Before he could get up McCarthy had crossed the home plate.

The freshmen were swarming about him in less than a minute, lifting him high above their shoulders. Butt reached up and seized his hand. In the midst of all their shouting and cheering Timothy pressed his way into the crowd to offer congratulations.

"Good work, Mac! I'm proud of you," he said.

McCarthy drew down the corners of his mouth in a derisive grimace. "Thanks, awfully!" he answered mockingly.

CHAPTER X

WELLS LEAVES

FOR a large part of that night some half dozen freshmen, armed with paint pot and brush, skulked about the byways around the college, darting out whenever the coast was clear to daub four sprawling numerals upon the sidewalk. Lawson—he of the fertile brain—had provided himself beforehand with a huge pail of white paint, and with Wells and Butt and two other freshmen—one of whom fell into the enemies' hands early in the evening—he stayed out making the walks hideous with glaring "Noughty-Even's" till long after midnight, while the rest of the class were held prisoners in the Dorms. It was an exciting evening, full of thrilling chases and hairbreadth escapes, for Noughty-Odd attended strictly to their sophomoric duty; and it is to be said for their vigilance that when Tresham College went to church the next day it found nothing left in token of the freshman victory but several unsightly smears on the sidewalk. McCarthy, being to a certain extent the hero of the day, was made to do double duty with a broom and a can of kero-

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sene when evening came. He swore that he alone scrubbed out more numerals than ten able-bodied men could have painted working steadily all night. Of course he exaggerated, but other freshmen had lame arms and aching backs to testify that the task of cleaning up had been no light one.

When Butt sneaked back to his room, close upon one o'clock, he found a missive waiting for him on his desk; there was a similar one for Durham when he should return from his football trip the next day. His experience with I Eata Pi had made Butt cautious in the matter of mysterious missives that came from unknown sources, but there was no doubting the genuineness of this one. It was unmistakably Kappa Chi's, and it contained the preliminary orders heralding the approach of initiation. What they were, and what the ceremonies that followed, are matters the initiated feel concern themselves alone. But when it was all over and they had come back to the Dorms after the initiation banquet, Durham's exclamation expressed what the four of them felt.

"Golly! I didn't know it meant so much!" he said, looking down at the red and gold pin on his breast with a funny expression of mingled pride and reverence on his fat face. "I hope I can do my part." And when Grey and Hawkins left to go to bed they all exchanged the newly learned grip,

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laughing a little consciously at the touch of ceremony it gave to their "good-night," but very sincere in their determination to be good brothers to one another.

After that followed peaceful days, in which the doors and hearts of Kappa Chi were thrown wide open to their new brethren. The ban that had made it necessary for Donnel to confine himself to brief after-chapel talks with Butt was lifted, with various other bans, and all the new friendships arrested by the rigors of ante-initiation time began to develop again.

Durham and Hawkins had both "made good" in football. With Hawkins that had been a foregone conclusion, but in the case of Durham it came only as a result of hard and faithful work. All his life he had led a care-free, lazy sort of existence, never exerting himself especially except in intermittent spurts of energy, and football season, with its weeks of regular, often disagreeable, exercise—and worse, its banishment of the fleshpots his inner man so loved—meant a period of discipline the like of which he had never known before. But from beneath his easy-going good-nature there was showing a bulldog kind of tenacity that had already put him into every game so far and was rapidly developing him into one of the best men on the Tresham team.

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Thirty-two North saw rather less of McCarthy after initiations. He still looked upon Butt as about the best friend he had in college, while Butt, after his brief period of doubt, had dismissed the whole baseball question from his mind as unimportant. He was content to take Mac for just what he appeared to be—an impulsive, irresponsible fellow, with rather uncertain standards, perhaps, and a rather stormy boyhood behind him, who would eventually find himself and turn out all right. Even Hawkins lost a good deal of his animosity toward him, which made it strange that McCarthy did not come around all the oftener, for deep down in his heart he had a more wholesome respect for Husky Hawkins than for any fellow he knew, except Butt. But after initiations he took to going more with his Gamma Nu brethren, perhaps because they made a sort of hero of him now that his baseball had given him a certain prominence, with more sure to come. That was a kind of thing McCarthy liked; one of his greatest weaknesses was that he couldn't resist anybody who flattered him, even when he knew it was nothing but flattery. He went with one or another of them indiscriminately, without having any special crony except a fellow named Atkinson, whom he liked apparently because he was such fun to quarrel with. But always he would return to the gatherings that frequented 32, if only for a little while, for

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after all they were the friends that meant the most to him.

So the days went by, and October passed into November. There was always the regular work to do, and once a week a football game for excitement. On other days Butt and Wells got into the habit of taking long walks. They tramped for hours among the hills, beautiful with the glory of an unusually late autumn, and learned to know each other as boys on the edge of manhood can only in the peculiar intimacy that seems to thrive best in the free out-of-doors. They were happy days.

On an evening toward mid-November they were having a particularly gay time in 32. Durham had a box of things from home—a treat he longed to save till the end of football and training. But that was still a week off, and, that the things might not spoil, he had gathered a small company and opened the box. There was something pathetic in the way he watched others gorge themselves with good things he himself might not touch.

“If these were the days of the early church, you two would go down into history along with St. Anthony,” laughed Wells, as Durham and Hawkins sat munching meager sandwiches, with an enticing row of cake and pies spread out in front of them. “Behold St. Bull and St. Husky resisting temptation!”

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Grey started up a silly song that had nothing at all to do with cakes and pies:

"We're coming, we're coming,
Our brave little band.
On the right side of temperance
We now take our stand.
We don't use tobacco,
For this is what we think,
That them as do use it
Are likely to drink.

Down with King Alcobo-o-ol!"

"Is Mr. Wells here?" piped a voice from the doorway. "Telegram."

The hubbub ceased for an instant, and started again when they saw it was only the boy from the telegraph office. Wells signed for the telegram and stood for a moment with it unopened in his hand. Then he went quickly out of the room. Only Butt noticed his going. After a few minutes, when he did not return, Butt slipped away and across the hall. There was no light burning in Wells's room when he opened the door, and Butt could not see him at first.

"Walter!" he called. "Are you there?"

"Yes." Wells was standing by the window, staring out into the dark.

"What's the matter?"

"Father's dead. I—I knew it just as soon as

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I saw the telegram. It was this afternoon—very suddenly.”

Butt tried to speak, but there was nothing to say. He reached out and pressed Wells’s hand, and that perhaps expressed what he felt as well as words. They stood thus, silent for a little time, then Wells spoke.

“I must go home,” he said.

“Isn’t there something I can do?” asked Butt.

“No, I guess not. Yes—have you got a time-table? You could see if there’s a train I can get to-night.”

“Sure!” Butt started for the door, glad of something definite to do, even if it were nothing more than hunting time-tables.

“And, Butt! Don’t tell them in there—they’re having a good time, and they’d think they ought to stop.”

“Of course they ought to!”

“No. I—I’d rather they wouldn’t know till I’ve gone.”

“All right.”

Grey was doing a comic stunt with his banjo and the rest were standing about, laughing.

“Great!” they applauded, when he had finished. “Give us another!”

“What are you looking for, Butt?” asked Durham, noticing Butt rummaging through his desk.

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"I thought I had a time-table. You got one?"

"Yes—somewhere in that middle drawer, I guess. Going on a journey?"

"No—I just wanted to look up a train."

"Where's Wellsey?" asked some one, noticing his absence for the first time.

Butt was studying the time-table and did not answer.

"What's up, Butt?" asked Durham. The attention of the whole room was caught now and all were curious. Butt had to make some sort of explanation.

"Wells has been called home," he said. "His—his father's sick."

"What a shame!" "Is it serious?" "Where is he?"

"In his room. Don't!" as Grey and Durham started for the door. "Let him alone—he doesn't want to break up the party." He went out before they could ask any more questions.

Wells had his suit case all packed and was fastening the straps.

"There's a train out of Southboro at eleven. You can get it if you take the ten o'clock car over. It's only a little after nine now."

"I guess I'll take the half-past car. I wouldn't want to miss the train," Wells said.

Butt helped him on with his coat and was start-

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ing to pick up his suit case when Wells suddenly held out his hand.

"Good-by—thank you," he said, and for the first time his voice broke.

"But I was going down to the car with you——"

"Please! I'd rather you wouldn't. I'm grateful—but you won't mind?"

Butt clasped his hand without answering, and passing into the hall he watched Wells go down the stairs in silence. He stood thus for several minutes after the outer door had closed, a strange feeling clutching at his throat. What if it had been his father, and he were going home like that? He swallowed hard and turned quickly back to his room.

They must have seen something in his face, for a silence fell when he entered.

"What's the matter, Butt?" asked Hawkins.

"Mr. Wells died this afternoon, and Walter has gone home."

They did not say much, but the remainder of the spread was put away and one by one the fellows said good-night and left. Somehow they all felt as if they knew Mr. Wells like an old friend—Walter had told them so much about his eager interest in them and everything they did. The blow that had come so suddenly upon their classmate, calling him

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away in the midst of their fun without their knowing it, seemed to have fallen very close.

Saturday Butt was alone. The football team had gone on its last out-of-town trip and Durham and Hawkins would not be back till to-morrow. After supper Butt went uptown to learn the result of the game.

Tresham had won, and all the students, gathered in front of the telegraph office to hear the score, had stopped and given many cheers for the team and the captain and all the players. It was after nine o'clock, the jubilation was over, and Butt and Grey were sitting together in 32 when Wells came in.

He had changed in a way that neither of them could have described. It was not merely that his face was thinner and paler, nor that his eyes looked tired and worn. He seemed older, and his very step and voice had taken on something that was more mature.

"I'm glad I found you two here," he said, almost before they could speak. "I wanted to explain to you before I do to the others—perhaps you will tell them. I must leave college and go to work."

They sat in stunned surprise. "No," protested Butt after a moment. "No, Walter, that can't be necessary! There are so many ways to stay."

"It isn't a question of being able to stay, quite. If it were that, I could work here—work my way

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through. I shouldn't have come to college at all, but I didn't know. Father had more debts than he realized, I think—and they must be paid. There is no one to do it but me. No—please let me tell it all first. His life was insured, but he didn't make the last payment. You remember he sent me some money for a celebration because I was class president? That was money he had been saving for his insurance policy, and because it wasn't paid the whole thing is lost. That doesn't seem right after he had paid so much, but they tell me nothing can be done about it. And the other debts—you see he has been sick a long time—worse than I knew, and they have been piling up, till now I've just got to pay them off some way. Of course, you have a right to know the real reason I'm leaving. But I'd rather the other fellows didn't know. I'll tell them it seemed best to leave—perhaps you'll tell them something if they think it's sort of queer? Somehow I can't make up my mind to let everybody know just how it is. And please don't try to think up ways for me to stay—I've thought and thought, and there is no way. There's just one thing I must do—and I can't do that if I stay here."

He spoke quickly, as if afraid they would interrupt and try to argue with him, and when he finished it was with a tone of finality that left them nothing to say in remonstrance.

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"When—when are you going?" asked Grey.

"To-morrow. It will be easier to go right away. I'll try to sell my things. I think Husky will like to come down and room with you, Ned. He's always been lonesome up there by himself, and that will make it pleasanter for you."

"But Husky isn't you!" Grey couldn't help protesting.

Wells held out both his hands to them, and a tremor passed over his face. "Don't! I know it's like breaking up everything, when it has all begun so beautifully. And the hardest part is to think that it is the one thing in the world that father would have hated most to have happen! You won't forget me—you two?"

The clasp they gave his hands must have been reassurance. Then the intensity of his feeling passed. He drew his hands away and shook himself with a sad little laugh.

"I guess I'm acting pretty girlish. Of course you won't forget—but when you've known a fellow only a few weeks and then don't see any more of him, you can't help growing apart. You see, there are so many of you here, that just one dropping out won't matter so much after a little while."

"Why—" Butt cleared his throat and tried to take a cheerful tone. "You talk as if you were going off to the North Pole. You aren't, are you?"

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"I'm going to New York—there's an old friend of father's there who says he'll give me some kind of a job. He wanted me to stay in college—he said it could be arranged all right. But when I told him just how things were, he agreed I'd better go to work."

"New York! Why, that's near! We'll be seeing each other ever so often!"

"Yes—I guess everybody gets to New York some time, sooner or later, and perhaps I can run up here now and then—if they have plenty of real cheap excursions."

Gradually they succeeded in cheering him up somewhat, and he became able to talk about his plans more calmly. "I won't have time to do much straightening out," he said. "I told Mr. Palmer I'd be on hand to start work Monday morning, so I'll have to leave by to-morrow noon. I want to keep some of my books, but the rest of the stuff I'd like to sell if I can. Do you suppose you could look after that, Ned? I can't hold an auction to-morrow morning—it's Sunday."

"Surely. Husky will probably want to buy some of it if he moves into the room."

"Pay my board bill out of it—I must owe for a week—and if there's anything left, send it along. I don't suppose you can get very high prices. And now—er—I'll have to give away some secrets—at

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least some business that was going to be a secret a week longer. But you are just the one to tell, Butt. You know we can have our class banquet any time after football season's over, and that's next Saturday. You'll be class president, Butt—now don't be modest! I know how the class feels about you. I had a committee—Marston, Sloane, and Atkinson are on it—and we had all the plans made to leave town a week from to-morrow and have the banquet Monday night in Boston. I'm telling you because I may not have a chance to see any of them, and I want them to be sure and not let the thing fall through. My going will make the sophomores all the less likely to suspect anything so soon, and the arrangements are pretty well made. Sloane will tell you the details of it, and Brown, the junior, will help. He's given me a lot of points."

"I'll speak to Sloane if you don't see him. But I don't want to do anything more than that," said Butt. "It seems to me you are taking an awful lot for granted. What have we got a vice-president for?"

"A figurehead—they always are. You'll be made president as soon as the class can have a meeting, so it's your duty to know how things are. You won't let it slip up, will you? I helped plan it, and I'd hate to see it fall through."

"I'll do what I can," promised Butt.

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Wells went into the details of the plans that had been made. The hotel had already been secured for the banquet, the menus ordered, and arrangements were under way for getting a special train to take the class to Boston Sunday night. Wells grew so absorbed in outlining the campaign that he forgot he was not to have a part in it himself. Butt could not forget, however. He listened attentively, but all the time his mind kept dwelling on the pity of it, that Wells, with all his enthusiasm and spirit, must give up the whole thing at the very beginning. At length Wells divined that his thoughts were really on something else.

"I guess you aren't very interested," he said. "I thought the plans were pretty well laid out."

"Oh, they are—I am!" protested Butt. "But—I don't see what we're going to do without you to manage it all."

"Oh, pshaw!" Wells said. But Butt's words gave him a pleasant glow inside. "You'll get along all right. You must write me how the thing comes off. I'll be thinking about it all the time."

"Of course we will," Grey assured him. "Do you know what you're going to do?"

"I'm going into Mr. Palmer's office at first. I could stay there, but he thinks he can get me something better after a little while—newspaper work, perhaps. I'd like that."

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They talked of Wells's plans, then of the banquet again, and the class. It was very late when at last Wells and Grey went to their own room and left Butt to go to bed. Even then he lay awake a long time thinking. It was hard to adjust himself to this sudden break in his little circle.

The next day was such a Sunday as one finds only in New England in the late Indian summer. The trees were fast shedding their last red and gold, and a Sabbath quiet hung over College Hill, broken only by occasional voices or the scuffling of feet through the fallen leaves as some one crossed the campus. Wells drank in the crisp, golden air in eager breaths. It seemed to him like the last day in a beautiful paradise. The news spread early that he was going to leave, and visitors kept pouring into North College all the morning to bid him good-by. He tried to keep a gay and cheerful air, but as noon drew near he stayed closer to Butt and Grey with a pathetic sort of wistfulness.

At length it was time to go to the train. The things he was going to take with him were all packed, and his desk, with the walls beside it, presented a bare and forlorn look where his books and pictures had been. He took a last look about the room, then seized his suit case.

"Come on—we'll have to hustle for it," he cried, leading the way down the stairs.

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There were a number of fellows at the train to wish him good-by and good luck. He was rather glad when the train came whistling around the curve, on time.

"Good-by, good-by!" He shook their hands all around. "Yes, I'll get back when I can. Good-by, Butt—write!" And he stood on the car platform, looking back at them till the train passed around a bend and they were hidden from view.

Butt found the afternoon pretty dreary. Grey hung about, blue and depressed, and he was glad when five o'clock brought Hawkins and Durham. They were surprised and sorry to find Wells gone, but they had yesterday's game to talk over and describe, which gave them all something more cheerful to think about. In the evening Hawkins started moving his things down into Grey's room.

The next morning, as Wells had foretold, the freshmen had a meeting after chapel and elected Butt class president. It was a short and businesslike proceeding, with none of the hullabaloo that went with regular elections. After the election the meeting broke up immediately, for most of the fellows were in a hurry to get to recitations.

It had all happened so quickly and without ceremony that Butt found it hard to realize he now held the highest honor in the power of his classmates to give him. In fact, he did not enter upon

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his new office with much enthusiasm—he would so much rather have remained a private citizen, under Wells's leadership.

But he had Sloane and Marston around to his room as soon as he got a chance, and together they went over the plans for the class banquet. He found there was little left for him to do, Wells had done so much. Of course, none of the class outside the committee knew there was anything afoot—that would have increased the chances of something leaking out, and they were not to be told till the day of leaving town. Although they had already been assessed for the supper tax, they knew only that it was coming off at some indefinite time in the future—possibly about Thanksgiving.

The principal thing that remained for Butt to do was to get out of town safely, for a freshman banquet, according to college custom, is not considered a success unless the president is present and the whole menu is eaten through. As the affair is usually held some distance from Tresham, the sophomores hardly ever try to follow and actually break it up by interrupting the eating. They concentrate their efforts on keeping the president from being there.

"I think you ought to get out of town by Friday, anyway," Sloane told Butt.

Butt saw it differently. "But that'll make them

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likely to catch on all the sooner. If they notice I'm gone they may manage to find out just what's going to be done and spoil the whole thing."

"They can't! They might lock a few of us up, but even if they find out where it's going to be, they aren't going to trot 'way down to Boston just to put a stop to it, and they can't hold the whole class here. Besides, what good will it do if everybody else does get off if you don't?"

"It's just as Wells told me," argued Butt. "With his leaving and our having a new president and everything, they aren't likely to suspect there's anything doing so soon. They'll probably think that even if we had been planning for it we'll have to change all our plans now. Besides, it's earlier than any class has had their supper for years. Noughty-Odd didn't have theirs till January, and they surely won't expect anything before Thanksgiving. I think if I leave Saturday night it'll be soon enough. That'll be only a day sooner than the rest go, and I'm not nearly so likely to be missed. I want to see the game Saturday, anyway—it's the best game of the season. I wouldn't stay just for that, but I don't think anything would be gained by going sooner."

"I guess that's right," said Marston; but Sloane was still doubtful.

"Well, you're running it—but I won't be easy

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till you're safely out of town," he said. "Now about that special train. I got a letter this morning from the—" He paused abruptly, and seizing a book from Butt's desk, went on, raising his voice slightly: "But this last problem stumped me. How in the world did you get it to come out right?"

They stared at him in amazement, but as he finished they understood, for the door opened. It was nobody but Durham, however, and Sloane threw the book back on the desk with a laugh. "Being a conspirator is quite an art," he said. "You have to be prepared for anything."

"Even reading a geometry problem out of a Latin book," laughed Butt. "What about the special train? Durham's all right—I'll have to tell him, anyway."

"They won't run a special train on Sunday—the best they can do is one o'clock Monday morning. It's an unearthly hour to be starting, but I suppose that makes it all the safer. I'd better close with 'em, hadn't I?"

"I don't see why not. The plan is to walk to Yorkville and take the train there, isn't it?"

"Yorkville?" exclaimed Durham in dismay. "Why, that's miles and miles away! I can never walk it."

"Sure you can—you'll be in prime condition after football season. It's only ten miles."

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"Ten miles!" Durham collapsed into a chair. "I'll be a walking skeleton when I've finished it. Why, this football has taken twenty pounds off me already!"

"Never mind, Bully dear," said Butt soothingly, getting up to tousle Durham's hair. "You're getting handsomer every day—almost human looking."

Durham gave him a tragic look, as if he were hurt too deeply for words.

"Why don't you pick on a man your size?" laughed Marston.

"Seriously, I think it will be all right to order the train, don't you?" asked Butt, coming down to business again. "I suppose we ought to speak to Atkinson about it, but I couldn't get hold of him this morning. He's sort of peculiar, and I'm afraid he might feel slighted if he's the only man on the committee who isn't consulted."

"Let him get sore if he wants to," said Sloane. "I'll speak to him, though."

"S-sh! Footsteps!" whispered Marston. "I think the conspirators had better disband for the present," and he rose to leave just as Grey and McCarthy entered the room.

Unhappily, Atkinson did see fit to feel offended because a class-committee meeting had been held without him. The selection of this committee had given Wells considerable trouble; it was important

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to have good men on it—a thing he could have been sure of by picking some of his closer friends; but such a course would have laid him open to the charge of partiality, and policy bade him choose fellows he was not particularly intimate with. In the cases of Sloane and Marston the choice had been all right, but Atkinson proved a difficult man to work with. He was one of the class who had been against Wells from the very beginning, and the candidate of the opposition on election night. Being put on this committee had propitiated him somewhat, but he was always imagining himself slighted, no less now that Wells was gone than before. He listened with indignation to Sloane's account of the meeting, and when Butt, after hearing about it, went around with explanations, he was received with a sullen manner that made him wish he hadn't tried to explain at all.

"I'm sorry if you think you've been neglected," Butt finished, almost out of temper and disliking Atkinson all the more because he was the cause of it. "I'm sure I tried hard enough to find you. I hope you will understand that and not be sore. We can't expect to accomplish anything if we don't all work together."

"I can't see how a committee is going to work together when half of 'em go ahead arranging things behind the other half's backs."

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"Oh, if you're going to look at it that way, all right! I've made you an apology where there wasn't any apology called for, and if you don't like the committee, you are perfectly free to resign from any time you want to."

"I will resign—I resign now!"

"All right! I don't believe the committee will shed many tears as long as you keep still about things," and Butt turned away, too angry to think whether he had been diplomatic or not, or whether his last words had not been uncalled for. He did not have Wells's faculty for conciliating people he didn't like, and life was too short to bother with preheads like Atkinson.

To tell the truth, that last remark was unjust, for there was nothing farther from Atkinson's intentions or wishes than to let fall anything that could give the sophomores an inkling of the approaching mass supper. But the injustice of it so filled him, the more he brooded over it, that he just had to relieve his mind to somebody, and that somebody happened to be McCarthy. They came together after supper in the hall outside McCarthy's room. The door was open and Mac went in to get a book off his desk without stopping to light the lamp. Atkinson followed him in.

"Where are you going?" he asked, seeing that McCarthy was evidently not going to stay.

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"Up to Chanler's room."

That loosened the floodgates of Atkinson's grievances. "That swelled-headed little runt! I'd like to know what you see in a snippy little peewee like him!"

McCarthy, pawing over the clutter on his desk in the dark, stopped in astonishment at Atkinson's tone. "Why, what's the matter with Butt Chanler?"

"Plenty of things. He's so high-headed that I resigned from his old committee."

"Banquet committee? Is—" He stopped.

"Yes. It doesn't do any hurt for you to know, but don't let on. The class isn't going to be told till Sunday. We had the plans all made, and now Chanler takes hold and starts to run everything different to suit himself. If it wasn't for the class, I wish he'd get caught. Everything was fixed for him to get away Friday, and he's so pig-headed he won't leave till after the game Saturday."

McCarthy laughed. "I guess Butt knows what he's doing," he said. He struck a match and by its light found the book he was looking for. "Don't be so down on him, At! He's all right—I know him."

"I know him as well as I want to," said Atkinson as they went into the hall.

"Won't you come up and make him a call?" McCarthy suggested with a grin.

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"No, sir!" Atkinson slammed the outside door as McCarthy ran, laughing, up the stairs.

"Your friend Timothy was up here looking for you," was Durham's greeting. "I hope he found you."

"No—let him look."

"O Lord! Then he'll be up here again!" exclaimed Butt with a wry face.

But Timothy did not come back. At that very minute, having heard the door of 32 close behind McCarthy, he was issuing from McCarthy's room. He had been lying on the window seat in the dark, waiting for Mac's return from supper, when the two freshmen came in. Whatever his business was, he had evidently decided to let it wait, for instead of mounting the stairs he turned his way toward the Gamma Nu house, and his face wore a most pleased expression as he went.

CHAPTER XI

SIDETRACKED

SATURDAY was the big day of the football season in Tresham, the day of the annual game with Easton. Ever since the early days of intercollegiate athletics Tresham and Easton had been rivals—with a rivalry that was quite friendly for the most part, but so keen that their contests with each other, no matter what in, were looked upon by both colleges as the ones of all others in which victory was most important. The two institutions had grown up together, separated by some forty miles of New England hills, and in many respects they are a good deal alike. If you ask a Tresham man what he thinks of Easton, he will tell you he wouldn't be an Easton man for worlds; but if he is quite frank he will admit that if there weren't a Tresham, Easton would come nearest to taking its place. So the fact that Easton is the next best is one of the biggest reasons why every Tresham team puts up its best fight to beat her, and one of the reasons why on this Saturday alumni came back to town in hordes to see the game with her.

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It was a bright, cold day, clear after a light snowfall the night before. A little pile of gray clouds rested on the farthest hills and there was a hint of returning snow in the air. Butt and Grey went down to the field early to get a good seat. They squeezed into a place on the top row of the bleachers near the middle. The crowd was already pouring in at the gates, and the edge of the field, in a huge oval, was lined with automobiles flying Tresham or Easton colors. The bleachers just across were filled with the trainful that had come down from Easton, waving their flags and making a brave noise with their singing and cheering. Presently the Tresham band came marching in with a long line of enthusiasts in its wake, and everybody stood up and joined in the song as they filed briskly in and overflowed the last empty seats. Then Norton, the senior president, stood out in front with his three assistants and started the cheering that was not to let up till the end of the game, though every voice be hoarsened to the merest whisper.

"Now, to start them with!" he cried, and the long-drawn slogan boomed out across the field with a thunder that, in the second of silence following, shook an echo from the close-by hills. "Now, one for Easton!"

The two colleges exchanged amicable cheers and belligerent songs until the appearance of the Tres-

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ham team drove away all such amenities in a loyal yell of welcome. There was always a funny catch in Butt's throat when he saw those white-sweated figures come trotting out upon the field. For a moment he had a feeling he could not have expressed that it was something more than just a football game, those eleven men going out to fight for the five hundred who looked on and cheered. Then the Easton team appeared, and after a few minutes the game began.

It was a game the like of which Butt did not see again in all his four years of college. Even when he was a senior, the year the famous team captained by Husky Hawkins tied Yale with a 0 to 0 score, he could honestly say: "But you ought to have seen the game with Easton my freshman year!" And through it all he and Grey sat on their wind-blown seat, clutching each others' arms and almost sobbing with excitement, so hoarse they could hardly utter a note of the

"You play your best, boys,
We'll do the rest, boys,
Fight for the victory——"

when driven to their five-yard line, Tresham suddenly stiffened and held like a wall of stone. That was the game in which Hawkins first really showed the kind of playing that made him an All-American half back two years later. And it was the game in

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which Durham offered up a broken nose for the glory of his Alma Mater and played on without knowing it until the last whistle was blown. Wilbur Durham, 2d, has a crooked nose to this day.

The first half ended and neither side had scored. The Easton contingent built big hopes on that—they had tired their rivals out and would show them in the next half; and they held a triumphal march around the field in great jubilation. Tresham felt the same way about it, but they sat in their seats and tried to equal the blaring of their band in their battle songs. Butt had no more voice left, but he croaked away as blithely as if he had been singing in the choir celestial.

The second half was one long and bitter fight to the very end. The ground was muddy from last night's snow, and they stuck pretty closely to straight, line-bucking football. Every inch of ground was won against the most stubborn kind of resistance, but the strain began to tell on the Easton eleven. They were more and more on the defensive now, and that inexorable pound-pounding against their line was pushing them slowly nearer to their own goal. The ball was being given oftener and oftener to one of the half backs—Hawkins, they knew afterwards, was his name—whose neck seemed the last thing in the world he cared about preserving. With the desperate "*Hold 'em! Hold 'em!*"

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from the Easton side lines in their ears, they struggled mightily to stop that plunging young giant. But he seemed to grow stronger with every onslaught. At the end of the play they would pick themselves up to find he had made his distance.

The whole circle about the field was one roar of excited enthusiasm, save the block of seats where the disheartened Eastoners were trying valiantly to shout encouragement to their team. Butt was stretching up on his tiptoes, cap gone, clutching unheeded at the shoulders of the man in front of him. That was Husky plowing his way down the field! Oh, if he could only have time to get across the line! The last minutes of the half were galloping past. There—some one was hurt! A great fear choked him. Was it Husky? No, only an Easton man—the breath knocked out of him. They were lining up again.

“Touchdown! Touchdown!” the crowd entreated madly.

Again Hawkins was given the ball, and again. He lunged into the hurtling mass, that clung to him and tried to shove him back while he tugged and strained, bearing them all along with his huge shoulders, till at last they downed him. “Down!” shrieked the referee, pulling at the piled-up players. It was close between the goal posts. Had he made it? At last the heap had picked itself up. At the

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bottom lay Hawkins, his arms clutching the ball just two inches across the line.

Then Tresham went completely mad, and stayed mad for five wild minutes. When at last they calmed down somewhat Butt had hopelessly ruined the hat of the junior who happened to be in front of him, and quiet, bashful Grey had hugged everybody in sight, including a professor's wife who always liked to sit with "the boys." But nobody cared—nobody noticed.

The quarter back kicked an easy goal and the players limped back to their places for another kick-off. But the ball had hardly curved through the air into a waiting full back's arms, when the whistle blew. The game was over and the crowd came pouring down into the field.

Butt managed to worm his way through the mass that surrounded the victorious team. Mud-covered, battle-stained figures they were, with faces showing drawn and tired through the plastered dirt.

"Oh, Husky, it was great!" he whispered hoarsely as they made their way to the field house. Just ahead of them some one was leading the Easton captain. He was sobbing like a child.

"I should say it was!" returned Hawkins thickly, because of a swollen lip. "Look at the Bull's nose!"

Durham's nose was really a pitiful sight. "I

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dod' dow whed it happed," he explained as he pulled off his dripping jersey, and Butt, who had followed them in and seated on a window sill to wait, had not the heart to laugh.

"Hello!" It was Thornton, president of the sophomore class, who came in, all enthusiasm. "Say, that was great work you two did! That touchdown of yours will go down into history, Hawkins. I never saw anything like it. Oh, Chanler, I was looking for you! We've got to have a bonfire to-night, to celebrate. Get your fellows together and get it ready, will you? You know where—in the Triangle down by the Lab. It ought to be ready to set going by eight o'clock. That really was fine work, Hawkins—" and he retired with another burst of congratulation.

"I wonder if you'll feel responsible for the way the sun rises and sets when you're sophomore president, Butt," Hawkins stopped on his way to the shower to observe. "If you do, I'm going to sit on your head for two hours regularly every day."

Butt was silent. To tell the truth, he was uneasy, and wishing he had not let his enthusiasm bring him into the locker house. He ought already to be out of town, and if he waited to superintend the building of the bonfire there was no knowing when he could get away. Durham and Hawkins were at their bath, and he made up his mind to slip

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away at once. Unfortunately, as he stepped outside into the growing dusk, he ran into Thornton, who was only just leaving the locker house, too. There was nothing to do but walk up to the college with him, for Thornton was full of advice and suggestions about where to get material for the bonfire—also how to get it. He even offered to help oversee the thing when the material was gathered. There was apparently nothing Thornton didn't know about bonfires.

In desperation, Butt went to the house and consulted Dayton. Dayton was a senior, but he was a safe person to intrust with the secret of the coming supper, and he listened sympathetically.

"I'm afraid there's nothing to do but wait till the festivities are over," he said. "The freshman president usually does manage the bonfire business—till the thing's lighted, anyway; and now that Thornton has taken the trouble to notify you officially, he'd probably think something was up if you weren't on hand. He's a nosy sort of person. I'd pitch in and see the thing well started, anyway, if I were you. You can get away later in the evening, and there's a sleeper out of Springfield you can take."

So Butt took only time enough for a snatch of supper and bent all his energies on getting a satisfactory pile of burnable stuff collected in the Triangle. There were plenty of helpers, for there had

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not been a bonfire celebration before in that year, and the freshmen entered into their part of it eagerly. They hired a team and scoured the town for empty boxes and barrels, while the more adventurous tried to capture a few gates and doorsteps—a practice that tradition has done its best to make legitimate. Portable gates and doorsteps were rare, however, and their owners had been wise in the ways of freshmen for many years. The adventurous ones would have had to content themselves with a few fence rails if McCarthy had not discovered a rickety little old henhouse about half a mile out of town. The discovery resulted in several inoffensive fowl being made homeless on a bleak November night with a snowstorm coming up, but the god of football received among his burnt-offerings something that must have been new to him in the line of omelets. Later on a collection had to be taken up among the class to pay damages.

It was altogether a worthy celebration. The fire was lighted with fitting ceremony and there were speeches. The voiceless enthusiasts even managed to produce some more cheers. The battered, happy captain was called upon; he said he was very glad they had won the game, and thanked them, which got quite as much applause as if it had been a real speech. In the midst of things somebody got into the college church and played the football song on

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the chimes. And then, as the crowd began to melt away, some one proposed that the freshmen have a nightshirt parade.

As the time passed Butt grew more and more uneasy. Perhaps he imagined it, but it seemed that there were always sophomores somewhere near, ready to yell, "Stop! Where are you going?" if he started away. It was now nearly nine o'clock. He went back to his room with the other freshmen, and while they arrayed themselves in nightshirts or py-jamas over their other clothes, he changed into some clean linen, resolved to take the next car for Southboro, whatever happened.

Durham had been to the doctor's having his nose attended to, and he sat glumly in his big chair, too miserable to feel the remotest interest in night-shirt parades. For him, being a hero had its drawbacks.

"Aren't people ever going to shut up and go to bed?" he grumbled. Butt was in the bedroom, trying to decide whether it was safe to take a handbag or not, and did not answer.

"Howdy-do, Durham?" It was a very cheerful voice that he suddenly heard in the other room. He peered between the portières to see who the newcomer might be. It was a sophomore named Crane—Butt had heard of him as the freshman who in hazing time the year before had been the chief per-

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former in a little impromptu farce called "The Hanging of the Crane"; later he had captured the sophomore who originated that humorous skit and hung him from a steam pipe in the hall, leaving him suspended by a trunk strap for half an hour before any classmates happened along to release him. Butt had always thought Crane would be an interesting person to know, but now was not the time to spend in making new acquaintances.

"Where's Chanler?" Crane was asking.

Butt was hesitating between hiding under the bed and showing himself, when Durham decided for him by answering serenely: "In the bedroom. He's getting into his costume."

Butt railed inwardly at his roommate's stupidity and hastily scrambled into a pair of pyjamas.

"Oh, hello, Chanler!" Crane greeted him as he appeared in the doorway. "All ready? This peecade is quite a ceremony, you know, and we wanted to be sure the class president was there to do the honors."

Butt wondered who "we" were and why "we" should have any idea he would not be there. It began to look suspicious, the way some sophomore was continually bobbing up to remind him of immediate presidential duties which they themselves must see safely performed. He determined to make a break the first minute he could get clear of them,

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even if he had to spend the night going to Southboro afoot.

"Oh, I'll be there!" he said. "Is the uniform all right?"

"Quite the correct thing," Crane assured him. "You aren't going into it, Durham? Well, one eleventh of it is in your honor, so perhaps it's more modest for you not to take part, anyway. So long." And he stalked out of the room in Butt's wake. All the way to the Triangle he kept up a stream of talk that Butt would have found amusing if he hadn't been worrying so hard about making his escape. As it was, Crane might as well not have said a word.

The full splendor of the bonfire had departed; only a glowing bed of coals remained on which a few of the thicker pieces of wood still kept up a fitful little flame. Some one threw a handful of fresh wood on to make more of a blaze, and the "pee-rade" began. The ceremony part must have been a little fiction of Crane's, for it was nothing at all but a lot of figures prancing about in a circle, clad as if they had just got out of bed, with no one but a handful of sophomores to look on. There wasn't really much enthusiasm about it after the first few minutes; the freshmen were getting too tired and some snowflakes were beginning to fall.

Butt suddenly noticed that every sophomore had disappeared. He ran quickly behind a tree and

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slipped off his pyjamas. He rolled them up and left them on the ground in a bundle—he must seize this opportunity without wasting any time. He furtively made his way out of the range of the firelight and hurried toward the street-car track. The last he saw of the paraders they had formed into a long line and were starting a snap-the-whip across the campus.

It was getting close upon ten o'clock. He would walk a little way out of town and take the ten o'clock car where no one would see him get on. He could reach Springfield, anyway, that night, and once there, there was little likelihood of any sophomores getting hold of him.

He came to a place in the street where the houses stood some distance apart and the sidewalk was in deep shadow. There he took his stand beside a tree and waited. The snow was falling rapidly now, shutting him in like a white wall. All he could see was a street lamp some twenty feet away, its light shining mistily through the flying flakes. For perhaps ten minutes he waited before he heard the far-off whir of the approaching car, bound for Southboro, and caught the distant green flashes crackling from the wet trolley wire. The noise of the car must have drowned them out—he heard no footsteps. He did not know that anyone was near till two figures suddenly loomed up beside him, coming

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abruptly as through a curtain. He tried to dodge behind the tree, but they had seen him. With a spring they each had him by an arm. No word had been spoken, but by the light of the car as it flared past he recognized his captors. They were Thornton and Crane.

After a minute they released their hold of him, and Crane spoke.

"We're sorry to have interrupted your journey," he said, "but it is only to provide you with a better vehicle. A trolley car is pretty plebeian—even we realize that—so we have a coach for you. Not a coach and pair—there isn't a pair to be had in town. But we have a goodly steed that will answer, and you can start on your travels in state."

A whistle from Thornton had evidently served as a signal, for out of the dusky whiteness of the road emerged a horse and a two-seated carriage, one man driving it. All in an instant Butt realized the whole scheme. With a quick movement he ducked from between them, hoping that if he could once get free the snow and darkness would help him to run and hide. But Crane was quicker. A grab and a jerk, and Butt was flat on the slippery sidewalk.

"Now that isn't nice, considering the coach and steed," said Crane, helping him to his feet. "Of course it isn't a real coach, but you might make believe you think it is. A little imagination adds won-

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derfully to a thing of this kind. If you want to be prosaic and literal, you can say you're only the president of the freshman class, caught on his way to his class supper by three mean sophomores. But just look on it as an adventure—a real, story-book adventure—and it takes on all sorts of romantic possibilities."

It wasn't easy to see much romance in it as they hustled him into the back seat of the carriage, and it became flatly impossible when the driver turned his head around with a gloating, "Hello, Butt!" Somehow it was not at all surprising to find that the driver was Timothy Doughton. Thornton sprang into the front seat, leaving Crane to take care of Butt, and Timothy flicked his whip at the horse.

"Better put this blanket around you," advised Crane. "'Tis a wild and stormy night, as our old friend Antonio sometimes says, and you don't seem to have prepared yourself for it."

Butt had not dared to go back for his overcoat, and he was glad enough of the blanket Crane handed him. He wrapped himself up in it and settled back in gloomy silence. His companion chattered on exuberantly, but if Butt was listening he made no sign of it.

"Come, come!" cried Crane at length. "This is no funeral! It's even fairly comfortable. Think of the poor sailors at sea to-night! They haven't

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any nice blanket to keep them warm, or three kind sophomores to take them off for a three days' holiday. Cheer up!"

Three days—Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday! And if he couldn't somehow get away in time to be in Boston Monday night, or if the freshmen did not find out he had been captured!—Butt writhed to think of it. He had no idea where he was being taken or what was going to be done with him. The arrangement had been that if he got away safely he was to telegraph to Sloane, but no particular emphasis had been laid on his doing so; a hundred things might happen to a telegram, or Sloane might forget, or think it had miscarried, and go on with things completely ignorant of how useless it would be. He must get word to them somehow, if by the next day there seemed no hope of escaping.

But as he thought it over longer it seemed impossible that his capture would not be known; the sophomores would surely blow about it before it came time for the freshmen to leave town—and then they would not leave, unless in the meantime he had escaped and got word to them that everything was still all right.

Look at it whichever way he would, however, there was one thing he could not dodge—he had been a pig-headed fool not to get away Friday, as they had urged him to. Even the satisfaction of

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having seen Easton beaten in the best game of the year was small consolation; no consolation whatever, in fact—this was a class matter, in which he had no business to think of his personal pleasure at all.

"By the way, Chanler," Thornton's voice interrupted his thoughts. "How far did you expect to go to-night?"

"I don't know," answered Butt warily. "To Southboro, anyway." Perhaps they did not know where he had been bound for.

"I suppose there's a special train waiting for you there. Hard luck! Special trains cost money, and it is rather a shame not to get your money's worth."

"I guess we can stand it. This free ride you're giving me is saving us one car fare, anyway."

"There speaks the philosopher!" said Crane approvingly. "No matter which way we're going."

"All sorts of roads lead to class suppers," rejoined Butt with an attempt at lightness he was far from feeling. How much did they know, anyway? And how had they come to know anything?

"Which might mean New York City or Shutesbury Four-Corners. Where were you going to have your old supper, anyway? Of course we know, but we want to be sure you do."

"Oh, I knew when I started out, and I don't believe they've changed the plans since."

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Crane laughed. "I *am* glad to know that. It tells me such a lot, too. Really, we're not vindictive or malicious or anything of that sort, and we're sorry you can't be there. But it's the fortune of war and part of the glory that goes with your office. We'll try to make your holiday as pleasant as we can, but there isn't much excitement where we're bound for. We ought to be there in an hour or so."

They settled into silence again on the back seat. In front Thornton and Doughton kept up an intermittent conversation, but it was in too low a tone for Butt to follow, even if he had been interested. He scanned the roadside every little while in the hope of discovering whither they were bound, but the snow made an effectual disguise even to what might ordinarily have been familiar to him. After a time the cold produced a drowsy feeling and he fell into a doze, from which he was presently aroused by Crane's hand on his shoulder.

"We have arrove," he announced, standing up and shaking the snow from the lap robe. "Behold the dread fortress where you are to be confined!"

They had driven into a stable yard, and a man with a lantern had already begun to unhitch the horse. Butt sprang stiffly to the ground, still in a daze from his abrupt awakening. Only a few flakes were falling now and the sky was clearing. A fat man with another lantern came out of the house

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with which the stable seemed to be connected, and advanced to meet them.

"Mine host, your jailer," said Crane in Butt's ear.

"Purty late—thought you wasn't goin' ter git here after all," was the fat man's greeting. "Come right in. John 'll put up the team."

They shook the snow off them and followed him into the house. The room he led them to was apparently the office of a small country hotel. Thornton led Butt to the counter that did double duty as a desk and cigar stand.

"You can register for us," he said; and under his direction Butt made the following entry: "Robert B. Chanler and party—A. B. Brown, P. Q. White, X. Y. Green." At the top of the page was the name of the hotel: "Greenmeadow Inn, Samuel Jones, Prop." Evidently it was not a place much visited by travelers; there were no other names for three days back.

Butt's fingers were so numb he could hardly write. When he had finished he went over to the big stove in the corner and stood warming his hands.

"I'll get you a little something to eat," announced Mr. Jones hospitably and disappeared to some inner region of the house, whence they soon heard the clattering of dishes and presently caught the aroma of hot coffee. The office offered little for

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inspection, and after a few minutes the sophomores wandered into the hall, leaving Butt alone by the fire. The instant they were gone he whipped out a notebook and scribbled something on a leaf of it. Then he went to the door through which Mr. Jones had vanished. It led to the kitchen, on the other side of which was a pantry. There mine host was slicing bread.

"Can you send a telegram for me?" asked Butt in an eager whisper.

"To-night? Guess not." Mr. Jones looked mildly startled at the idea.

"No—to-morrow. There must be a telegraph office here."

"Yes, there is, over to the depot. But to-morrow's Sunday."

"This has got to go! Send it for me, and don't tell the other fellows. You can keep the rest of the money," and he handed out the slip of paper and a two-dollar bill.

Mr. Jones looked at it doubtfully. "I dunno. The tall feller had all the dealin's with me, and he said——"

"I know, but this is all right. Read it if you're afraid. It won't make any trouble; but they mustn't know till after it's sent."

Mr. Jones painfully deciphered the scrawl: "*Supper off. Thornton has me at Greenmeadow*"

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Inn. "I dunno," he repeated. "How do I know this won't bring a passel of students up here for a row?"

"Cross out the 'Greenmeadow Inn,' then. Here!" Butt himself ran his pencil through the words. "Please! I give you my word it's all right. I'll explain when I get a chance." He could hear steps coming from the office. Mr. Jones deliberated silently as they came nearer. It must have been the two-dollar bill that decided him. He thrust the bill and message into his pocket, and was serenely cutting bread when Thornton appeared at the door.

Between the Sunday telegraph service at Greenmeadow and the lack of it at Tresham, the nearest Sloane came to seeing that message was finding a notice on his desk after dinner that a telegram had come for him, which he could get by calling at the telegraph office. Of course the office was closed when he called, but Sloane took it for granted that it was from Butt, telling him all was well.

If the sophomores were generally acquainted with the fact of Butt's having been kidnapped they kept wonderfully silent about it. In years past astute second-year men had spirited away freshman presidents on the eves of expected freshman suppers and made a great hullabaloo over it; but always they had happened upon the wrong time—the kid-

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napping had never interfered with the real plans at all. This year, however, the sophomores were sure—they knew the precise date if they didn't know the place, and to make the whole thing doubly humiliating they were going to let the freshmen go unsuspecting, leaving them to discover what had happened to Butt when it should be too late to turn back.

The committee were tremendously elated and excited. Atkinson even forgot to sulk, and resumed the duties he had dropped so indignantly, while Sloane and Marston went about notifying the class with marvelous secrecy, happily unconscious that they were being gleefully shadowed by nearly half the sophomore class.

At eight o'clock they were ready to start. In every room in the Dorms a light was left burning, that the darkened windows might not betray their absence. At ten o'clock a freshman who could not leave till the next day was to go around and put them out.

Grey had already left town. His leg would not allow him to walk to Yorkville, and he had started for Boston by a more roundabout and more comfortable route. Hawkins and Durham sneaked out of the dormitories together on the last stroke of eight, and by a circuitous way, that led them over fences and through backyards, reached the railroad.

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There they concealed themselves behind a pile of ties and remained in hiding till a whistle from Sloane signaled that the march was about to begin. Freshmen sprang up from everywhere—the innocent-looking fences and ditches had harbored them in scores—and silently, as if the merest whisper would arouse the town half a mile away, they started on their ten-mile tramp.

Once out of sight of the village they were very gay. The first step had been successfully executed, and Sloane and Marston led them forth with all the air of generals who have triumphantly outflanked the enemy. Right blithely they covered the first miles, stretching down the track in a long, jolly line. The night was dark and the railroad twisted through lonely woods and bleak, snow-covered fields, but they were a merry crowd, all together on their first class escapade. The dark and loneliness gave just the right touch of mystery and stealth.

But ten miles is something of a jaunt, especially when you start on it just when you ordinarily would be beginning to think about bed. Before more than half of it lay behind them the enthusiasm began to flag. The gait slackened perceptibly, and the leaders, who at first had had difficulty in restraining some eager ones from starting at a run, found it necessary to exhort their lagging companions long and frequently.

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Poor Durham thought those last miles would never end. Nearly two months of training had done a good deal for his endurance, but with the stiffness that the Easton game had left with him, this long tramp over the railroad ties didn't seem much of a way to start in on a life of ease and comfort again. He grumbled from time to time, and Hawkins would grumble in reply, which kept the others from grumbling by making them laugh. But everyone was glad when the lights of the Yorkville station yard showed ahead of them, and they tumbled into the waiting car with genuine thankfulness.

The committee were in duty bound to wait and see that the train started safely, but everybody else hastened to curl himself into the least uncomfortable position he could devise and get a few hours' sleep. It was a broken sleep at best, but the two cars were quiet till morning.

Hawkins was among the first to open his eyes to the new day. The sight of his classmates in the gray dawn, huddled grotesquely on the straitened seats, struck him so funny he had to wake up Durham to share the joke. A poke in the ribs had no effect, so he unceremoniously tipped him on to the floor. Durham picked himself up hurriedly, with a sleepy impression that there had been a wreck. Hawkins's grinning face reassured him and roused his indignation.

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"Oh, don't try to be sore—I couldn't make you budge any other way! Just cast your eye along the car there. Wouldn't you think we were a gang of immigrants just arrived in the land of the free?"

It took an interval for the humorous aspect to dawn upon Durham, but when Hawkins began to tumble another slumberer off his seat he saw a way of being revenged for his own rude awakening, and started in to help. Together they went the length of the train, leaving a wake of wrathful freshmen behind them. But the class was effectually aroused, and because this was the beginning of their day of days, they did not waste much time in being indignant.

The end of the journey was now near. They did not go straight to the city; it was part of the careful and elaborate plans that they should leave the train at one of the suburbs and "lay low" during the day—presumably because Boston itself would be running over with spying sophomores. Hawkins considered this arrangement highly ridiculous, said so in loud tones and announced that he was going to proceed to where there was something doing as soon as he had had breakfast.

That was not at once, however. The one lunch-room within sight of the little stone station was not prepared for an onslaught of nearly two hundred ravenous freshmen at seven o'clock in the morning,

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and the supplies on hand were exhausted in ten minutes. With the delay of procuring more provisions and then getting them served, it was well on toward nine o'clock before Durham and Hawkins set out to take a car for Boston, and after ten when they reached there.

Boston can be a very bewildering place to the stranger. For Hawkins, who came from a middle-sized town in Illinois, this was a first visit, and though Durham had passed through the city many times on journeys to and from a summer home in Maine he was not at all qualified to act as a guide. They might not have lost themselves so often if Hawkins had not started in with a stubborn idea that he was going to find his own way around. "Do you suppose I'm going to let 'em think we're a couple of greenhorns, having to ask where we are every time we go 'round a corner?" he asked indignantly. Durham laughed and said "All right," but after an hour of fruitless wandering he took matters into his own hands and inquired the way whenever they found it necessary.

They put in a very patriotic day. Bunker Hill and kindred historic spots were places Hawkins had looked forward to seeing for years, and he chased about to them with avidity; while Durham, to whom sight-seeing was about the most futile thing imaginable, dawdled along with the air of a man perform-

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ing a disagreeable but charitable duty. At five o'clock they arrived at the hotel where the supper was to be held, ready for an hour's rest before the evening's festivities.

In the hotel lobby they found Grey and they had hardly joined him before the committee came hurrying up.

"Where's Butt?" asked Sloane eagerly.

"Search me. Isn't he here?"

"He was coming straight to the hotel—and stay here," added Durham.

"He isn't here—hasn't been here, or sent any word."

Durham and Hawkins stared at the speaker in dismay. Sloane hurried back to the telephone where he had been trying frantically for the last hour to get a connection with Tresham.

"Do you suppose—" Durham began, and stopped. Marston shook his head gloomily.

"We thought perhaps he'd show up with you," he said.

Atkinson turned on his heel and stalked away with a manner more eloquent than words.

"Oh, he'll turn up all right," said Durham uneasily.

"If he doesn't he's queered himself with this class," Marston responded shortly. "We told him he ought to start sooner."

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Sloane emerged from the telephone booth, a look of settled grimness on his face.

"It's all up," he said throwing himself into a chair. "Thornton and Crane have him up in the country somewhere. They've had him there since Saturday night."

CHAPTER XII

A PLAN MISCARRIES

NOVEMBER could hardly be called a busy month at the best for Mr. Samuel Jones of the Greenmeadow Inn, and Sunday, especially, was a day when his services as host were apt to be in the very least of demand. This Sunday, then, was a conspicuous exception: there were four guests in the house. They were "college students," to be sure, and for that reason creatures upon whom it was best to keep a watchful eye, but they seemed to have plenty of money and were therefore worthy of an attention which the four regular boarders were accustomed to do without. So Mr. Jones was up bright and early on this Sabbath morning in spite of the late hour at which he had gone to bed, ready to present himself at the first call from the two "best rooms" upstairs.

Butt had been quartered with Crane, for which he was thankful. If he must be a prisoner at all it was something to have a kindly jailer. His sleep was more or less broken all night, and the sound of Mr. Jones replenishing the fire in the office stove

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brought him wide awake in an instant. Crane was still snoring peacefully. Butt cautiously crawled out of bed and began a noiseless toilet. He accomplished it successfully, all but the shoes, which he thought best to leave till he was safely in the hall. In his stocking feet he started for the door, with bated breath, and one eye on the sleeper. Every board in the floor had a lusty creak in it and his journey across the room was punctuated with a series of rasping squeaks that he thought must rouse the whole house. But he reached the door and still the sleeper seemed to sleep. His hand on the knob, he turned for a last assurance that all was safe. Crane's eyes were wide open, gazing at him with a drowsy smile.

"Good morning, merry sunshine," he yawned.

Butt halted as guiltily as if some one had yelled "Stop thief!"

"What in thunder are you doing, all dressed? It must be some ungodly hour. The house isn't afire, is it?"

Butt sat down again and began putting on his shoes. "No, I guess not. They've been building a fire in the stove underneath, though. That's what woke me up."

Crane stuck a foot out from beneath the bed-clothes to test the temperature. "Whew! I don't wonder this place is popular in the summer if the

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weather is as cool in proportion all the year 'round. Say, why couldn't you stay in bed like a decent Christian? I've got to get up and mount guard over you now, while those two classmates of mine finish their sleep like gentlemen."

Butt tied his last shoe-lace and stood up. "I tried not to disturb you," he grinned, "and I don't mind a bit if you go back to sleep again."

Crane got gingerly out of bed and began hustling into his clothes. "Of course, I see your point of view perfectly. But if you don't mind waiting we'll go down and have breakfast together. I wonder if we'll have pie again this morning? Mrs. Jones makes blamed good pies, but I expected to dream of my prehistoric ancestors after that repast we put away last night."

He was dressed and ready to go downstairs in a remarkably short time and together they descended to the office. Mr. Jones, having got the fire going to his satisfaction, was sprawled out before it smoking his pipe. He greeted them cheerily and asked if the other gentlemen were up yet. On learning that they were still asleep and were likely to remain so till noon, he sang out an order to some one in the kitchen to bring on the breakfast. It was not yet half-past eight, but the other guests had apparently already broken their fast and gone their ways; no one seemed to be around but Mrs. Jones, a dumpy,

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timid looking woman who served their breakfast without a word and then vanished.

The morning bade fair to be a very long one. Sunday papers did not arrive in Greenmeadow till eleven o'clock, and the town as viewed from the office window offered little attraction. It seemed to be all one street with a few scattered houses and many bare trees. Crane discovered a rattley old piano in the parlor and hammered distorted tunes out of it until a wrathful pounding on the floor overhead told him he was disturbing the peace.

"It's time they got up, anyway," he said, but he cut short his performance and inquired of Mr. Jones if there wasn't something they could do to kill time. Mr. Jones suggested that they go to "meeting"—Mrs. Jones was going and would be tickled to death to have them escort her. They acted on his suggestion, rather to Mrs. Jones's distress, apparently, for when she emerged, bonneted and shawled for church, she seemed to shrink from their escort. She submitted to it, however, and bore up bravely under the curious glances of the congregation when she slipped into her pew flanked by two strange young men.

Her distress might have ended there but for Crane's unfortunate habit of levity. This morning it pleased him to draw ridiculous pictures inside the cover of his hymn book which Butt had to look at

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to avoid attracting attention. Butt managed to keep a fairly straight face, though Mrs. Jones looked red and worried. But when Crane exhibited a caricature of the three of them sitting there in the pew with expressions of unholy piety on their faces, he could hold in no longer. In crimson mortification he turned and bolted for the door.

By the time he had reached the sidewalk Crane was at his heels. "You—you—" he sputtered. "Aren't you ever doing anything but plotting to get away?"

"I wasn't trying to get away!" Butt wiped away a tear of mirth and sobered down. "We've both disgraced ourselves."

"I don't imagine Mrs. Jones will want our escort to meetin' again," returned Crane placidly.

But Mrs. Jones's indignation did not stop with anything so mild as that. She came home from church red-eyed and grim, and absolutely refused to get a mouthful of dinner if that scalawag was to sit at the table. Thornton and Doughton had arisen by that time, ravenously hungry, and to avert a family disruption Crane absented himself from the meal, after private assurance from Mr. Jones that he would not suffer from lack of food.

With Crane away from the table Timothy came more to the front. He had been surprisingly quiet so far during this outing. As a matter of fact, he

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did not feel particularly at home with Thornton and Crane. They were the two leading men in the class, in point of popularity, and Doughton, though he had a certain following among his own crowd, was not accustomed to sharing in their councils. He would not have been included in the present business ordinarily, but considering that he furnished all the information they had not felt they could decently leave him out. Perhaps he had been aware of this—at any rate he had not borne himself with quite his accustomed jauntiness. But it was Crane who always had the silencing effect upon him, and during dinner he relaxed into something like his usual manner.

The talk was largely between him and Mr. Jones. Butt ate in silence—he made no secret of the fact that he was not interested in exchanging conversation with Timothy Doughton. Mrs. Jones waited on them dismally, as if she were performing a necessary but painful duty, and the “regular boarders” devoted all their attention to the meal. Thornton dropped a word now and then, but watched the landlady most of the time, smiling faintly. He wished he had been one of her escorts to church.

It was a midday dinner and when it was over, a long, dreary afternoon still stretched ahead. Mr. Jones had words in private with his wife, as a result of which he was allowed to lay forth a somewhat

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cooled repast for Crane, who professed to be very penitent. After that Crane and Thornton went out for a drive—the roads would be beastly, of course, but it couldn't be worse than hanging around the hotel.

From a window in the office Butt watched them drive away. Timothy stood at another window. Butt sauntered into the parlor and Timothy sauntered after him. At length he went up to the room Crane and he had slept in; it was cold there, but he was getting irritated at the close watch that was being kept on him. Timothy followed.

"'Fraid I'd jump out of the window?" asked Butt shortly.

"Can't be too careful," smiled Timothy in reply, producing some cigarettes. "Have one?"

"No, thanks. As long as you're bound to stick close I don't see any use in freezing," and Butt led the way downstairs again.

The office was deserted and the two sat in silence for a time, Butt fidgeting and Timothy smoking.

"I suppose you're going to keep this up?" Timothy observed at length.

Butt did not answer.

"I mean this grouch of yours," Timothy pursued, and still there was no answer. Timothy got up, strolled over and stopped in front of Butt's chair. "Because it's a pretty kiddish way of acting," he

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went on. "This freshman-sophomore business is all a game, you know. If you happen to lose why not take it like a sport?"

Butt's face grew red. "Freshman-sophomore business hasn't anything to do with it. It's just you and I, and our classes don't make any difference—or the class supper."

Timothy looked down at him and exhaled a long puff of smoke. "Put it that way if you like. I suppose you've got something against me—personally?"

Butt twitched his head impatiently. "What's the good of talking about it?"

"Oh, I want to talk about it! Is it because I hazed you?—others did that. Or that little affair in the woods with McCarthy?"

"There's no use bringing up particular things. If you want me to say so in so many words, I don't want anything to do with you. There are plenty of reasons."

Timothy's face flared red for an instant, then turned pale, and a look that might have been either pain or resentment came into his eyes. "For instance?"

"I know you're not honest. You've lied to—several people. You're carrying on one lie and making another man carry it on, that I know of for a fact."

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"Then it *is* McCarthy! Well, what about him, when it comes to that?"

"There's something to be said for him."

"And he's said it—trust him for that! I'd like to know what it is though, because I'd like to know why you think he's fit to have anything to do with while I'm not."

"Anything that McCarthy told me is his business and mine. He told me the truth—you ought to know what that is."

"He has so many versions of the truth I'd like to know which one he used on you."

"Suppose you tell me your version. I can tell you if there's any difference."

"That's taking too long a way round." Timothy threw away the butt of his cigarette and thrust his hands deep into his pockets. "The point of the thing as far as McCarthy's concerned is this: He's sailing under false colors up here, and that's how he'll go on sailing if he goes on at all. He's in too far to back out even if he wants to. Perhaps you don't realize quite all it means. They have a pretty rigid way of looking at professional baseball up here, that freshmen often don't get on to right away. When you do get on to it, you may change your mind about him."

"It'll still be his business—and mine."

"And none of mine, you mean? Perhaps not."

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But what I'm driving at is this. You seem to be a friend of McCarthy's—I don't see just why with all those Sunday-school notions of yours—. That's all right—wait till I'm through. I'm a friend of McCarthy's, too, and I've showed it in a good substantial way. I've made it possible for him to get a college education. I brought him up here and vouched for him, and got him into my fraternity. I'm the kind of a friend that'll stick by him. I wonder if you are?"

Butt stood up. "What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. You know McCarthy—at least you ought to, if he's told you anything like the truth, and you go on chumming with him. But I don't believe you know college as well as you will before the year's over, and I'm wondering if you'll stick by him when you do know."

"If he isn't worrying I don't think you need to."

"That's what I wanted to know, though you don't put it very politely. You see, you and I are the only ones who know how he came to be such a star pitcher, and I was afraid if it came to a pinch you'd spoil everything by letting on." It was evidently very pleasant to be relieved of that fear. Timothy smiled almost genially. "I guess we can call it a bargain then——"

"You can't call it anything of the sort!" Butt blurted out indignantly. "I'm not making bargains with you about McCarthy or anything else."

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"Oh, well, suit yourself!" Timothy flushed at the rebuff, but his voice showed no sign of the effect Butt's words had on him. "We'll simply say that we're both good friends of Mac's, if you like that any better. It amounts to the same thing as far as this goes."

Butt looked up into Timothy's face with a passing, fervent wish that the Lord had given him six more inches of height. He did not like having to talk up to Timothy Doughton.

"I guess your idea of friendship and mine may not be just the same," he said deliberately. "I don't see any harm in his having played professional baseball. I haven't thought much about it. But you're so keen about keeping it secret it almost makes me think there must be something worse to it than I know. My liking McCarthy doesn't make any difference in what I think is right or wrong, and if I do find I'm mixed up in anything crooked, don't think I'm going to stay mixed up in it because you call it being a good friend."

Timothy had never learned to listen to Butt's "preaching" and keep his temper. "You go trying any funny business and see how you come out!" he cried angrily.

Butt walked over to the window and stood looking out without answering.

"You understand?" Timothy demanded.

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"Are you making threats, Timothy?" Butt asked the question almost soothingly, and with a smile. Timothy could not see the smile but the tone was eloquent enough.

"Yes, *sir*, I'm making a threat! Don't you think for one little minute that you're the whole thing up here because you've got yourself elected president of your class. I've got a little something coming to me, and it won't be any trumpery class office like that either. Then you can go swaggering around as much as you please—I'll have the goods, and we'll see who comes out ahead. Just wait!"

"I've waited a long time—you've said things like that so often, Timothy. And while I'm waiting I'm going out for a walk. You can tag along behind if you want to—because if anyone drives up and offers to take me back to Tresham I'm going to jump in and let him."

So Butt went for a walk, in the course of which he happened upon the Greenmeadow railway station, and that he might be prepared for anything that fate could throw in his way he carefully noted the best way to reach it. Timothy, being a zealous jailer, had to endure the ignominy of tagging along a foot behind, for in spite of his short legs Butt managed to keep at least that far in advance, tramping along with head up and absolutely ignoring his companion.

It was late in the afternoon when they got back

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to the hotel. Crane and Thornton had returned and they sat down to a merry supper. Mr. Jones had prevailed upon his spouse to allow Crane to sit at the table again. Afterwards they sat in the office and listened to lengthy reminiscences from the landlord till they nearly fell asleep.

"I hate to break up the party," said Crane at length, after an unsuccessful attempt to smother a yawn, "but that drive certainly made me sleepy. Driving always does. I'm going to bed. *And* some one else can have the honor of guarding the prisoner to-night. He's one of these early-to-rise fiends, and I can't have my beauty sleep spoiled twice running."

"I'll take the room with him," volunteered Timothy, almost eagerly.

"We'll match for it," said Thornton. "The one who doesn't get stuck can do duty to-morrow night."

They matched coins and Timothy lost—but the loss might have been a pleasure from the smile that spread over his face. He had an idea that he had reduced guardsman's duty to a fine art, which it gave him great joy to practice in this particular case.

Upstairs Timothy examined the room minutely.

"Oh, there aren't any trapdoors—not even a chimney I can crawl out by," remarked Butt, watching the inspection with an amused smile.

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"All the same I'll ask Mr. Jones for the key. I'll sleep more comfortably," said Timothy.

While he went for the key Butt tried the windows. They were the squeaky, hard-to-raise kind, and he saw at once that it would be impossible to open one of them without making a lot of noise.

Timothy locked the door and put the key under his pillow with a good deal of satisfaction. They undressed in silence, and just before getting into bed Butt boldly threw up one window.

"Why don't you let it down from the top?" asked Timothy.

"They didn't make windows that way when they built this house,"—which happened to be true. "I'm going to have fresh air, even if it worries you so you don't sleep a wink all night," and he jumped into bed.

Timothy soon followed. He evidently felt his responsibility as guardian rather heavily, for he tossed and turned for hours, perhaps with the idea that the only safe thing was to keep awake, though how he expected Butt to escape after the elaborate precautions to restrain him is difficult to imagine. Butt lay rigidly quiet, with eyes closed, until finally his bed-fellow quieted down and went to sleep. Even then he did not dare stir, but lay motionless, looking around the room. It was bright starlight outside, and he could see plainly enough. His clothes were

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all in a pile together. If he only dared try to get the key! But opening the door would make a noise, and even if he got out he might get into difficulties downstairs. The safest thing was to jump from the window.

Very slowly and cautiously he crawled out of bed, and after a long pause to make sure Tim had not been disturbed, he began to dress. Timothy slept soundly. His former energy in keeping awake had resulted in making his present slumber all the deeper. As Butt slipped on his coat and stood up for a last look before creeping over to the window, an idea struck him. It might wake Timothy, but— He reached over, and very carefully ran his hand up under the pillow. His fingers closed upon the door key, and he drew it out quickly. Then hastily but noiselessly he gathered up Timothy's clothes and made his way to the window.

The room faced on the front yard, which was some fifteen feet below the window. Butt dropped the armful of clothing to the ground, and then climbed upon the sill. He crouched there, hesitating. The sleeper stirred and turned over with a long sigh. Butt gathered himself together and jumped. He landed on his knees and hands, unhurt. He got up quickly and listened. No sound came from the room above. He made a bundle of Timothy's clothes with a little chuckle, and thrust them under



“He crouched there, hesitating.”

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the piazza that ran along the side of the house. Timothy would have his troubles in the morning, even after they succeeded in getting him out of the locked room.

The night was very cold, and dark enough, in spite of the starshine, so that it was not easy to pick one's way. Butt took the road and set out in the direction of the station. He knew nothing about the trains that ran through Greenmeadow, nor even what railroad the town was on, but there seemed to be no other method of getting away. The station was quite dark and apparently deserted. He circled the little wooden building and found a tattered time-table which he was able to read by striking matches. The road ran north and south and did not pass through Tresham. He did not mind that, however. He merely wanted to get away from Greenmeadow. But when he discovered there was not a train in either direction till 9.27 his heart sank. Where was the wee bit of glory he had looked for from escaping, even though his escape was too late for the class still to get to Boston as they had planned? He might better have stayed quietly in bed. But having started he would not turn back. Perhaps a freight train would be passing through that he could take before his absence was discovered and a deputation sent down to watch the 9.27.

He missed his overcoat keenly and looked about

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for a sheltered place to wait in. He found an angle between the station and the freight shed from which he could watch the road, and there he sat down on an empty crate, shivering and well-nigh hopeless. From time to time he would walk about and swing his arms briskly to keep warm, and then go back to the corner again. Perhaps an hour passed, or two, he could not tell, and then he heard the far-off screech of a whistle. He got up eagerly and stood on the platform waiting. Far away he could plainly distinguish the glimmer from an engine over the bare tree tops, and in a few minutes the headlight shone upon the track, coming suddenly from around a curve. It was a freight, puffing laboriously up the grade that trains must climb coming into Greenmeadow from the south. Butt did not know just what he was going to do, but he waited. There was no slacking of speed as the train came nearer, but it could not have slowed up much without stopping altogether. The engine passed, and still Butt waited, hoping the train would stop. He had waved at the engineer leaning out of the engine cab, but his signal was unheeded. Car after car went rattling heavily by. Then the green light of the caboose came nearer and nearer. As it drew abreast of him Butt ran and with a leap landed on the step.

There he clung, while the train passed over the top of the grade and began to increase its speed.

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He could see through the glass upper half of the door. Three men sat inside, one the conductor, apparently, and the other two brakemen. He did not look at them long but kept out of range of their eyes if they should happen to turn his way. He did not want to be discovered till they were well out of Greenmeadow. After a few moments a man appeared coming part way down from the lookout in the top of the caboose. He said something Butt could not hear and the conductor arose and opened the door.

"What are you doing there?" he asked gruffly.

It was no use to try to hide any longer. "Hanging on," answered Butt.

"Come in here!"

The air inside the caboose was close and thick with strong tobacco smoke, but a box stove made it beautifully warm. Butt went straight to the stove. He was almost numb with cold. The four men eyed him curiously. "Why, he's nothing but a kid," one of them said.

"Well, how about it?" the conductor questioned.

"I had to get out of town and this was the first train that came along," Butt said with chattering teeth. "I can pay my fare."

"What are you in such a hurry about—running away?"—suspiciously.

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"Yes. No!—not the way you mean. Some fellows locked me up"—and Butt gave them a hurried explanation of the class supper and how he had been brought to Greenmeadow, his imprisonment there, and how he had escaped.

"Don't you know we don't carry passengers?" the conductor asked a little less sternly.

"I didn't know anything about it. But you can take me to the next station, can't you? I'll pay my fare."

"We don't stop at the next station, but I suppose we can't drop you out here in the woods. We aren't going Boston way, though."

"That doesn't make any difference—the supper's all off now, anyway, on account of my telegram. If I can go to some place where I can get back to Tresham——"

"Well, we don't connect with any line that runs to Tresham, but you can get a train from Mill Junction to Springfield. I guess that's the best you can do. Too bad you can't have the supper after getting away. There wasn't much use in getting away after all, was there? Except fooling the other fellers. I've heard about some of the didos college students cut up, but they was mostly smashing things or something. Somehow, you don't look old enough to be a real college student. Not more'n fifteen, be you?"

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"I'm seventeen—nearly eighteen," Butt answered with a sudden access of dignity.

"Well, don't get huffy about it. Perhaps you haven't got through growing yet. I guess you're pretty sleepy, ain't you? You can bunk in there if you want to. I'll wake you up when we get to the Junction."

Butt was glad enough to "bunk in," and he climbed into the shelflike compartment indicated. It was hard, without a mattress of any description, but he was too tired to mind that.

"Won't one of you want this bed?" he asked as he wrapped himself in the single blanket of which the bedclothes consisted.

"We're on the job," answered one of the men shortly.

It was nearly eight o'clock when one of the brakemen aroused him. "This is Mill Junction," he said. "The early train down passed us 'bout half an hour ago, but there's another 'round 'leven."

Butt got out and watched them for a while as they switched cars on and off. The conductor was here, there and everywhere, hands full of bills of lading, identifying cars and signaling to the engine. At length the train was ready to pull out again and Butt had a chance to speak to him.

"I haven't paid my fare yet," he said.

"Oh, I guess that will be all right." The con-

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ductor beamed upon him in kindly fashion. "Just a little something to buy the boys a smoke and we'll call it square. We haven't got any regular passenger rate, precisely."

Butt found a place where he could wash up and get breakfast, and then he wandered around the town till train time. The train would go into Springfield about two o'clock and he could get back to Tresham by supper time.

It was on the train that he discovered what shed an entirely new light on the situation. He was skimming through one of the afternoon papers he had bought to help pass the time, when an item in the *Western Mass. News* struck his eye. "Sophomores outwitted," the headline said. He read it in one gulp. "Freshmen get safely away for their banquet. Last night at a late hour when their rivals thought them safe in bed, the freshman class of Tresham college stole out of town for their annual class banquet. Just where the banquet is to be held is not definitely known, but it is rumored that Boston is to be the scene of the festivities. The freshmen worked a neat trick upon the vigilant (?) second-year men by walking to Yorkville by night, where a special train awaited to take them to their destination. The sophomores did not discover they had been outwitted till this morning at chapel, where the freshmen were conspicuous by their absence."

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"By golly!" Butt ejaculated. His telegram had miscarried or Mr. Jones hadn't sent it, or something, he did not care what, had happened, and there was still hope. If only he could get to Boston in time! But of course he could. It was not yet two o'clock, and there would be an afternoon train out of Springfield that would get him there by six.

He almost feared to get off when the train drew in, lest some sophomore be there to capture him again. He slunk into a retired corner of the waiting room and stayed there till the Boston express came in, nor did he feel safe till he was fairly out in the country again. Then he settled back in his seat and breathed a long sigh of relief.

At Worcester he almost got left behind by dashing out to send a telegram to Sloane. It suddenly occurred to him that they would not know what to make of not finding him at the hotel; they might imagine all sorts of things. As a result of the telegram Sloane and Hawkins were at the station to meet him with a cab, and they would not let him out of their sight till he was safely in the dining room and in his place at the head of the table.

Probably the class of Noughty-Even of Tresham college banqueted much as any other freshman class banquets. It is always a pretty gay affair, with a lot of harmless noise which many staid people may think

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unnecessary. If this particular class made more noise than is customary there is the excuse that they had snatched victory out of the very jaws of defeat, as one of the speakers of the evening put it. If that be an excuse, they made the most of it, from the moment Butt appeared and they knew the snatching had been triumphantly executed. Some one was inspired to start chanting, "Bringing in the Clams" while the first course was being served, to an ancient Gospel tune whose original import was something quite different, and that began an uninterrupted succession of cheers and songs that made stray listeners wonder how in the world they had any chance to eat. They did eat, however. The menu was gone through, according to the law of freshman banquets, with the president joyfully presiding, and then came the speeches. Youthful orators tried their wings, and whether they soared eloquently or came tumbling wordlessly to earth, was all one to their enthusiastic hearers. Applause was impartial and very generous, culminating in a veritable ovation when Butt completed his narration of the Green-meadow adventure.

It broke up at a very respectable hour, as such functions go. Most of the fellows were novices in the art of banqueting, and if they failed to do all the things a wide experience of such affairs sometimes teaches, they enjoyed it with a zest and spirit that

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no other occasion of the kind would ever have for them. On that evening class spirit, hitherto a thing of flag rushes and baseball games, became cemented by good-fellowship, and many a man discovered for the first time that Smith, who sat behind him in Latin, or Jones, who swung dumb-bells beside him in Gym, was a pretty good sort—he wished he'd really known him before.

There was a train to take them back to Tresham at one o'clock. In the interval before departure a few adventurous spirits prolonged the festivities by setting out to explore the town, but the whole class was safely rounded up by train time and another night journey begun.

It was a very tired-looking lot that trooped into the freshman gallery at chapel the next morning, for the sleep one gets on the seats of railway coaches is not the most refreshing in the world. But the few who cut chapel in order to go to bed regretted it; they missed the sight of three sophomores unmercifully guyed by a lot of flippant upper classmen. Thornton, Crane and Timothy had solemnly agreed that from their lips no one should ever learn the true tale of how Freshman Chanler had got away from them. But unfortunately, they had not been able to find Timothy's clothes—they had not thought of the piazza—and Timothy had been obliged to ride back to town clad in some spacious garments

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borrowed from Mr. Jones. That had caused remark, and questions, and somehow—perhaps Crane was the guilty one—the truth had leaked out. A couple of juniors, who cared more for what they considered a joke than for their class dignity, had secretly procured these borrowed garments and out of them constructed a dummy which they smuggled into chapel. After the chapel exercises were over and the faculty had filed out this dummy was hoisted into view—a ridiculous figure, very fat and wobbly, whose meaning was made unmistakable by a flaring placard: “T. Doughton, Kidnaper and Incarcerator.”

To the freshmen it was an entirely joyful proceeding. For the first time in their college career they had an opportunity to be spectators while their accustomed tormentors furnished the show, and Butt, to whom they gave the credit of having made the whole thing possible, rode that morning on the topmost crest of his classmates' favor. Personally he felt rather sorry that Timothy had to be the chief one involved—in his customary unaccountable fashion Timothy would probably manage to stick the blame on him and try to get back at him—but it was all too funny to worry him much. He went from chapel to classroom with untroubled soul, and slept serenely through a Latin recitation in which the professor was mindful enough of his own freshman days to do about all of the reciting.

CHAPTER XIII

BUTT AND McCARTHY

WINTER passed and the smell of spring was in the air, but the warmth of spring was still far enough away to make the fire in 32 North very cheery and comfortable. Butt and Hall came in from supper to find Hawkins seated before it, mysteriously occupied in cutting some rubber bands into very small pieces with a pair of scissors, while Durham sat watching him. The corners of Hawkins's mouth twitched in a suppressed smile as Butt stood staring at him.

"What's that?" Butt demanded curiously.

"A plot—a vile plot. And incidentally some rubber." Hawkins finished his cutting and gathered up the tiny bits in his hand. Reaching for the tobacco jar he dumped the handful into it and began carefully stirring the mixture.

"You'll spoil it!" Butt protested.

"Probably. Never heard of rubber making very good smoking, did you, Bull?"

"We're trying an experiment," said Durham, as if that explained it.

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"Yes. McCarthy—well, I'll admit he has points that aren't at all bad, but I bet he hasn't had any tobacco of his own for at least two months. So we're making a new mixture for him."

"Oh, come! It'll hurt him!"

"McCarthy? Don't you believe it! He's got a constitution like a camel. But it may suggest something a little more forcibly than anything else has been able to. It isn't that we mind the tobacco—we're not a tight crowd. But the confounded nerve of the man! If there's anything I can't stand it's a fellow that's all the time sponging. This concoction may make some sort of an impression on him—a plain hint won't. Did he ever show any signs of appreciating that package of tobacco we sent him by mail?"

Butt broke into a laugh. "Of course he appreciated it! He'd have thanked you if he'd been sure who sent it. He said it was mighty kind of you to send a sponge along with it—it was probably to keep the tobacco moist!"

"Innocent child! Well, this will be a different proposition."

Butt drew up a chair for Hall and settled back comfortably in his own. "I'll bet the joke's on you this time," he remarked. "The baseball men start training to-day."

"I'll take you! What 'll you bet?"

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"Oh, I didn't mean really bet, but I'll do it. Make it a soda."

"You're on. Who ever heard of a baseball man cutting out smoking because he was in training? Mac will drop in presently for his quiet little evening smoke, and he'll make straight for that tobacco jar."

"All right. We'll see. But Mac is taking hold of this baseball in real earnest. He could make good, anyway, but he's going to make more than just good. Did you see the practice to-day?"

"Me? No. I don't see much sense in watching this cage practice. You can't tell how a man's going to show up till you get him out on the field."

"Oh, you can get a pretty good line on a pitcher. Mac's getting into form in great shape."

"He's got the dandiest chance any man could ask for," observed Durham. "You know that's right about Findlay. The Athletic Board——"

"Hello, Mac!" Hawkins's tone was unusually cordial, and he looked up at the newcomer with a suspicious twinkle in his eye.

"Howdy-do." McCarthy cast an approving glance over the comfortable room and, as if he were obeying Hawkins's unspoken wish, his hand sought his coat pocket and drew forth his pipe. "Beautiful spring isn't all it's cracked up to be yet—this fire is all right." And he sauntered over to the tobacco jar.

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Hawkins watched him fill his pipe, a gleeful look spreading over his face. "You lose, Butt," he grinned.

"Lose what? There a bet up?" asked McCarthy. "Who's got the matches?"

"Butt thought you'd started in training. I bet you hadn't."

"Oh, you mean the smoking? Well, not yet." McCarthy drew up a chair and joined the fireside circle. "Say, you don't think it really makes any difference, do you? I never could see that it did, but I've half a mind to try cutting it out."

"You don't mean it, do you?"

"Sure. I don't think it hurts me any, but it seems to be the proper stunt and I don't want to take any chances. I'm out to show these guys up here what I can do and if quitting the smokes will help any I'm right on."

"I'd do it," Durham advised sagely, taking a comfortable pull at his own pipe. "You don't want to run any risks now. You've got too good a chance with Findlay out."

"*Findlay?* What's the matter with him?" Hawkins sat bolt upright as he put the question. He had not heard Durham's interrupted bit of news about what the Athletic Board had done. "Has he flunked?"

McCarthy, too, sat up with a tense air of

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expectancy. "Did he get caught?" he asked sharply.

"Yes—and he's out of football and baseball for good, now."

"That's hard luck! He'd probably have been captain next year," said Hall. "I tell you, you have to be foxy to play summer baseball now-days. The Athletic Board are right on to their job. It's tough on Findlay, but it leaves a pretty clear field for you, Mac."

McCarthy, however, did not seem particularly jubilant over his prospects. Conscience may have had a little to do with it, but there was something much more concrete. He had taken many deep puffs from his pipe and he was not enjoying it.

"What kind of tobacco do you call this?" he demanded.

"We smoke only one kind." Durham's tone could not have been more innocent. "Too strong for you?"

"Eh? No, indeed. You can't produce anything too strong for me," and to prove it McCarthy took another deep puff, though he was getting white about the mouth.

"I was afraid we couldn't." Hawkins could not resist rubbing it in a little. "You've been hardened on too many people's brands."

McCarthy was not stupid and Hawkins's words

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were too pointed for him to miss their meaning. A suspicion of what was the matter suddenly dawned on him, but he was too miserable to be angry. The deadly work had been done and just on the point of a remonstrance he suddenly dropped his pipe and dashed out of the room, his face very pale.

"I shan't blame him if he drops poison in your tea," Hall remarked.

"I don't drink tea—and this part of it is really the least important. I shan't be satisfied till I see what the moral effect is." Hawkins began opening the windows. "Whew! It smells like a rubber plantation on fire."

Durham got up, a troubled expression on his usually placid face. "I say, I'm sorry. He's sick!"

"Sure!" Hawkins's answer was serenity itself. "You know yourself the way to a man's heart is through his stomach—you just worship your boarding-house lady. Perhaps we can work a reform the same way. Here!" Durham's hand was on the door knob. "Don't you go down doing the Red Cross act with him. The good of McCarthy's soul demands that he suffer alone, and sympathy is debarred."

Durham came back to his chair. "As the king wills."

Hawkins dumped the rubber mixture into the waste basket and opened a fresh box of tobacco.

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"What about Findlay, Bull? How'd you hear about it?"

"Dayton told me. He's the senior on the board you know. It'll be in all the papers to-morrow."

"I call that rough! Why can't they be satisfied with just dropping him? It's sort of rubbing it in to have it printed all over the country that he's a professional. Findlay's a decent fellow."

"That doesn't make any difference. The board is death on professionalism, and they'll swat it just as hard as they can."

"Tell me!" Butt stood up and faced the other three. "Why is this Findlay business so awful?"

"Why, it isn't awful, except that it makes us lose our best pitcher. If Mac doesn't make good we'll be in a deuce of a hole."

"I know—but you talk as if it made him a sort of criminal."

"Oh, boy, boy! Have you been here all these months and don't know that professionalism doesn't go in this college?"

"Now don't get on your grandfather air! I know there's a lot of fellows that seem horribly shocked at the idea, but honestly, aren't there a lot of fellows that have played ball for money—here and in other colleges—clean, decent fellows, too?"

"People say so," said Hall. "It doesn't do to really know too much about it, though. The best

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thing to do if you hear any rumors is to stop your ears. Nobody wants to hear anything really definite—not even the Athletic Board. But when they can't ignore it any longer of course it's up to them to jump on it good and proper. They've got our amateur standing to uphold."

"But it isn't right! A man that knows enough can earn money by tutoring without anybody's talking about his amateur standing, and look at that fellow Wilson! He makes I don't know how much, singing in a choir over in Southboro, and it would be silly to fire him off the glee club on account of it. Why can't Findlay, or anybody else, earn money just the same? It just happens that their line is baseball."

"You're all right as far as that side of the thing goes, Butt," said Hawkins. "But it's different when it comes to athletics. All the colleges that amount to anything—all of 'em that it's any credit to play with, agree that the men on their teams shall be amateurs, and they do their best to keep the agreement. That's what makes college sport decent and clean. You let anybody that comes along be eligible for our teams and see the class of fellows that would come flocking in here—a regular gang of muckers."

"But I don't mean that kind. Findlay isn't a mucker. Couldn't they make it so fellows like him could be all right?"

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"Findlay wasn't playing fair. He knew he wasn't living up to the rules of the game, and I guess the fellows want the rules lived up to even if they don't talk much about it. Besides, if they let him say they couldn't draw the line anywhere."

"When you come right down to the morals of the thing how can it end in anything worse than what we've got now?" asked Hall. "You make rules to insure amateur athletics, and instead of all of them being amateurs a lot of them are liars!"

"Oh, no!" protested Durham.

"Oh, yes! Take our team. How many men do you think there are on it that have never played ball for money—men you're sure about?"

"I don't know."

"Neither do I. But I bet we'd all be surprised if we did know, and because we don't know positively we keep still about it and pretend it's all right!"

"I don't see how it can be anything but all right," Durham protested again. "Don't they have to give their word?"

"Something of the kind, if there's any question. But they take mighty good care there isn't any question raised if they can help it. You don't find the athletic people rushing into any reforms when its going to cut off their own noses."

"But they needn't do that—just ask every man what comes out for the team if he's all right."

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"That's where the rotten part of it would come in worse than ever," Hall returned warmly. "If you're going in for real cleanness I claim it's just as bad to be a liar as to be a professional ball player. As it is now a fellow who doesn't object to a downright lie says flatly he hasn't ever played ball for money. He plays under an assumed name in the summer and says he doesn't play at all. If he has a little conscience he doesn't go quite so far—he simply says he hasn't been paid for playing ball. But he's been a bell boy or something like that in a summer hotel, with a salary I don't know how many times bigger than any ordinary bell boy ever gets, playing ball afternoons for the fun of it! Isn't that lying just as much as the other?"

"Findlay didn't lie."

"Maybe not. But he'd been caught—perhaps lying wouldn't have done any good."

"I think you're rather making things look worse than they really are," said Hawkins. "Even if the faculty and the Athletic Board didn't catch on to things that weren't on the level, the fellows would get wise, and I don't think they'd stand for it."

"I'm not so sure. If it were put to them as an abstract proposition they wouldn't, but when it comes to being the case of one of their friends it's different. Don't you suppose there are friends of Findlay's that have known all about him before now? And if

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lying would have saved him some of them would probably have been willing to lie for him. They are lying, in a way, when they know he shouldn't be playing on our team and don't report him."

"You're a crank," laughed Hawkins. "That's putting it pretty stiff. I don't think I'd care to let you get to talking about our athletics to a man from another college, either. You wouldn't leave him with a very good opinion of us."

"Oh, yes, I would. I think athletics is as clean here as you're likely to find it anywhere. But there's always a chance of the sort of thing I've been speaking about—I know of at least three cases in other colleges. Some man like Findlay, who really needs money, earns it the way he can earn the most, and unless he's one in a million he isn't going to let it interfere with playing on his college team if he can prevent it simply by keeping still. Most men will even lie about it, to keep it from interfering."

"Well, it's hard luck for Findlay, but we've got Mac, so it won't be so bad for us. Cheer up, and let's let the morals of the college take care of themselves for a little while. Tobacco, Bull!" Hawkins knocked the ashes from his pipe and reached for the tobacco jar.

"It isn't fair, somehow!" exclaimed Butt.

"Come, infant! You can't carry all the troubles

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of the universe around in that young head of yours!" Durham drew him down on the arm of his chair and began tousling his hair. "We can thank the gods and the faculty it's Findlay, since it had to be some one. As somebody has already remarked, it gives Mac the chance of his life."

Which didn't comfort Butt at all, for the thought of McCarthy was just what was bothering him.

It was considerably later when McCarthy came back to 32 North, wearing the chastened look that often follows a strenuous but passing sickness at the stomach. Hawkins and Hall had gone for a visit to the night-lunch wagon uptown, Durham had gone to bed, and Butt was preparing to follow him.

"What was that dope I was smoking to-night?" he asked, seeking the window-seat. "It put me out for fair, and I thought I was pretty well broken in to anything in the tobacco line."

"A new mixture of Husky's. He made it himself."

"He made it good and proper. I know why, too—I'd like to fool him and go on sponging just to pay him back. But I'm going to cut out the smokes."

"Why?"

"I'm really going to train. Coach told us to cut it out, but a lot of the fellows don't. I'm going to,

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though. Now Findlay's out of the running you don't catch me taking any chances."

Butt wrapped his bathrobe about him and curled up in front of the fire. "What do you think of this Findlay business, Mac?" he asked slowly, his eyes fixed on the burning logs.

"I think it's pretty hard lines. But it makes it easier for me. Findlay's a peach of a player, and I'd have to go some to be anything but a second string man with him to buck up against."

"Supposing they found out about you?"

"Oh, they won't. Nobody knows but you and Tim."

"But doesn't it make you feel sort of—funny?"

"Of course not. I'm safe enough."

"I don't mean that." Butt reached for the poker and began doing some unnecessary tinkering with the fire. "I was thinking how I would feel if I were in your place. I think I'd be sort of bothered."

"How do you mean?"

"I wouldn't know just what to do."

"Why, I shan't do anything."

"Probably I wouldn't either. But it wouldn't seem just square to have another man put off the team for the same thing I'd done myself."

"Shucks!" McCarthy pounded a pillow into shape and shifted his position so he could see Butt better. "It may not be just square, but what are

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you going to do about it? Lots of things aren't square. It isn't square to have such a rule—you've said so yourself."

"I know. I don't think it is. But it's the rule just the same. People have to stick by the rules—if they aren't willing to they ought to keep out of the game."

"You mean I ought to back out—resign, or something like that? Well, I guess not!"

"N—no—no! Nobody could expect you to do that—nobody would want you to. But— Oh, thunder! What did you ever tell me about it for?"

"Well, I like that! I didn't want to tell you!"

"I know it—it's one of the things I've got against Timothy Doughton. If it hadn't been for him I'd be peaceful in my mind and not all muddled up like this."

"You're a fool, Butt." McCarthy arose and stood looking down at Butt with his crooked smile. "I don't see any use in anybody at all doing any worrying—certainly not you. It's not your funeral."

"That's what I'd like to think." Butt drew his feet up under him and clasped his arms around his knees. "It's silly of me, I guess, but I can't help thinking of a time in high school last year. A fellow in my class did something he shouldn't have, and some of the other fellows knew about it—saw him do it. They could have stopped him, but they didn't."

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Afterwards the whole business came out, and when the principal had them up before the school he punished the fellows who looked on just the same as the fellow who'd done the thing. He said it was like a murder trial—if you see a man commit a murder and don't try to prevent him you make yourself an accomplice. By not trying to hinder him you are really helping him—and morally and legally you're just as guilty as the real murderer."

"What has that got to do with us?"

"Don't you see?"

"You mean you're in the same boat with me because you happen to know something the rest of the people here don't?"

"Something like that. Hall said a good deal the same thing only to-night. That's why I wish I didn't know."

"Butt, you're the limit!"

"I told you I was silly. But I can't help it, and I don't know what to do."

McCarthy stood looking into Butt's face for a full minute before he spoke again.

"I know what you'll do," he said suddenly.

"You'll tell! I know you, and—look here! Don't you do it, Butt—don't you dare do it!" He leaned forward, one clenched hand outstretched.

Butt was on his feet now. "Why—*dare?*"

"That's what I mean. Don't you *dare!*"

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"If it's the only thing——"

"Don't you dare! We're good friends—there isn't a fellow in the world I'd do more for than I would for you, but if you go butting into this you'll never know what struck you!"

A hard glitter came into Butt's eyes and his fists tightened.

"That's no way to talk to me," he said slowly.

McCarthy's arm relaxed and fell to his side.

"Butt, you're crazy!" he cried.

Butt sank back in his chair again. "We aren't either of us very sensible," he said with a strained little laugh. "And there you are."

"But I can't see— Good Lord, I *can* see how it's going to end! You'll go fussing around and that Puritan conscience of yours will keep swelling bigger and bigger till finally—I might as well have chucked the whole thing in the beginning! I may be thick, but I'm blamed if I can see your way of looking at it."

"I'm afraid I can't make it any plainer."

"But you've changed! We thrashed this whole business out before—you admitted that it was all right for me to play on the Island team, and just to please that squeamish old conscience of yours I threw up Tim's scholarship. Isn't that about all any man's called on to do? I thought you were satisfied—and now you're hunting for more trouble. Look here,



“McCarthy’s arm relaxed and fell to his side.”

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BUTT AND McCARTHY

Butt! Think what'll happen if you go to making more fuss! I'll have to quit college if I can't play ball—yes, I will! I'm no good for anything else. I don't want to quit. You fellows are the first decent crowd I ever got in with, and if you throw me down—well, you've made a silly fool of me for one thing. I don't want to go back to the old gang, and I won't be fit for anything better if I can't stay here."

Butt threw out his hands with a despairing gesture. "Go on and punch my head! Perhaps you can knock some light into it."

McCarthy stood silent for a moment, and then with a vigorous shake of his shoulders he stepped toward the door. "Go to bed!" he said. "Honestly, Butt, I think there's something wrong with you. It ain't healthy to split hairs the way you're doing. You sleep on it, and you'll find you feel more sensible about it in the morning. Nightie-night!"

Butt did not go immediately to bed, however. He had worked his mind into a turmoil that made sleep impossible just yet, and he continued to sit there before the fire, turning things over.

It had taken Butt a good while—a surprising while—to arrive at the college point of view regarding professional athletics. Perhaps this was because the whole system was so new to him; in high school such things had not needed to be considered, and he

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had viewed McCarthy's case from the simple standpoint of whether McCarthy, as an individual, were in the right or wrong. As he figured it out, it was all right for McCarthy to earn money by playing baseball. The wrong part of it was that he had been accepting money under false pretenses from Mr. Johnson. But that had been overcome, though not without difficulty. Butt had succeeded in touching McCarthy's sense of pride and fair dealing, with the result that Timothy had been forcibly requested to return Mr. Johnson's "scholarship." With Butt's assistance, McCarthy had found other ways to help himself financially, which involved no sailing under false colors, and so the whole business had been straightened out, as Butt thought, for good and all.

But the discussion earlier in the evening, though it had brought out several conflicting and confusing points of view, had showed him what seemed to be the underlying principle at stake—the honor of the college. To Hall that honor depended upon individual honesty, to Hawkins and Durham upon the honesty of the college as a whole. Butt could not see any essential difference in the two ways of looking at it. As far as it concerned the one case with which he had to do there was only one consistent course open. McCarthy might have all the right in the world to earn money in any honest way he could, but so long as the college was sending out

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teams made up of men who had never turned their athletic skill to financial profit it was not right for him, having earned money in the particular way he had, to let himself be considered a strictly amateur player.

Butt knew that was a view it would be almost impossible to make McCarthy accept. And if he would not accept it, and act upon it, was it not up to him to do something himself? That was the question he had been struggling with all the evening. He tried to avoid it, but it would not be avoided, and now he put it to himself squarely.

It was not a pleasant question to answer. If he were not willing to be a virtual liar by keeping silent about facts that should be made known, and if McCarthy did the perfectly natural thing and refused to divulge them himself, nothing remained for Butt but tale-bearing. It was an ugly thing—there was nothing Butt could think of more despicable—but it was what everybody would call it if he should go up to a member of the Athletic Board and say: "McCarthy is a professional ball player. You must not let him play on our team." And everybody would be right. But what else was there for him to do? Here he was, president of the biggest class in Tresham College, and it was his duty not only as an individual, but as the chosen representative of more than a quarter of the students, to do what he

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could to uphold the college's good name. Would it be fulfilling that duty to let a baseball team be sent out whose victories, if it won victories, would not be absolutely clean and honest according to the standard by which other college teams were measured?

Hawkins, back from the lunch wagon, stuck his head in at the door.

"Aren't you abed yet, kiddo?" he called. "Want a dog? I brought one up for Grey, and he's gone to sleep."

Butt was grateful for the "dog"—eating it afforded some relief from the labyrinth in which he had been stumbling—and he longed to tell Hawkins about the whole business, and ask him what he thought. If he were going to tell in the end, he might as well begin by telling Husky now—but he could not bring himself to do it. When it came to actually speaking out he was smitten with a feeling of treachery to McCarthy. Instead, he tried to frame a hypothetical case to submit for Hawkins's judgment.

"What would you think of Findlay if nobody had found out about him and he had gone on playing?" he asked abruptly.

"Eh? I don't know—it's what he's been doing for the last two years, I imagine."

"But what do you think of his doing that?"

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"I suppose he ought to have quit playing, if you want to be really strict about it."

"Supposing some of the fellows had known about it. Do you think——"

"Butt!" The door flew suddenly open, and McCarthy burst in, in pyjamas, as if he had come straight from bed. "I know—" He stopped short as he saw Hawkins, and looked keenly from one face to the other. "You've told already!"

"I haven't!" Butt sprang up and faced him.

"You were just going to, then!"

Hawkins looked in astonishment at the two facing each other, McCarthy glaring, Butt flushed and indignant. "What in thunder's the matter with you?" he asked in amazement.

McCarthy relaxed from his tense attitude and sank into a chair.

"I've gone 'dippy," he said disgustedly. "I couldn't go to sleep thinking about what you'd been saying, and I got it into my head you'd fly out and tell the first person you could find."

"*Will* you tell me what you're talking about, or is it none of my business?" demanded Hawkins. And then, suddenly, something of what was the matter came over him. Butt's interrupted question, McCarthy's excited accusation—McCarthy, the baseball player—he fitted it together in a flash. "I guess I know," he said.

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"It's nothing at all!" cried Butt hurriedly. "Don't go to jumping at conclusions, Husky. It's nothing at all."

McCarthy looked glumly up at them. "What's the use, Butt? He's guessed—it's just my luck."

"Oh, you two infants, you two babbling infants!" exclaimed Hawkins. "If I wanted to listen to your prattling long enough probably I could get the whole yarn—but life is too short. I suppose you're in some sort of a mess like Findlay's——"

"I'm not! But Butt thinks I ought to be."

"Ought to be? Well, I— Will one of you talk sense for just one minute? Or I'm going to bed."

From their combined explaining he at length got the whole story. Some of it did not surprise him, but much of it did.

"Now, Butt thinks I ought to beat it straight to the Athletic Board and ask 'em to chuck me," finished McCarthy.

Butt was watching Hawkins, as if awaiting judgment, while Husky stood revolving the case in his mind.

"Do you intend to keep it up—this playing ball in the summer?" he asked abruptly.

"I don't know— No! No, I'm not, if I can scrape through this. It isn't worth the kind of a fuss we've had to-night. I'm a softy, but I don't like it."

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"Then I don't see why you need to bother your heads, or souls, or whatever it is that's making all this rumpus—either of you. Our friend Timothy got you up here with the idea that the kind of thing you had been doing was all right—you didn't know any better, and it strikes me that it's drawing the line a little fine when you go to blaming a fellow for what he don't know, especially in this case. It isn't as if you were a burly Mick just coming up here for graft. Perhaps it isn't possible for a man to make an amateur of himself after he's once taken money for his playing, but if you never play professional ball again I should think it could be called all right. You begin with a clean slate, and forget what's happened before—a lot of men people think are all right have a blamed sight worse record. It's what you are here, not what you were before, in your case."

They had both been watching him almost breathlessly, as if his voice were deciding some vital issue. As he finished, a happy grin spread over McCarthy's face and he turned to Butt. "Do you see?" he asked.

Butt saw enough. It seemed as though he had never heard wiser words—they sent his difficulties melting into thin air like a wisp of fog in the summer sun.

"It sounds too easy to be right," he said hesi-

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tatingly. "How many people do you think would look at it that way, Husky?"

"I don't know—I don't know that I care. Anybody with common sense would."

"I don't believe I care, either. It's the only way that's fair to everybody, and I don't think it's hedging. If it were— Oh, thunder, Mac! I'll find something else to stumble up on in a minute. Why don't you go to bed? Is this the way you start training?"

CHAPTER XIV

A TRIP TO COVENTRY

IN spite of the loss of Findlay, Tresham had no cause to find fault with her baseball team. The last of May came around with a thirteen-inning tie game with Yale, a 2 to 1 victory over Princeton, and an overwhelming defeat of Easton, which it could boastfully add to its string of lesser triumphs. A sophomore named Phillips, who had been tried out the year before without much success, proved to have developed into a really reliable pitcher, but McCarthy was the big man of the team—the one to whom everybody looked to win games at critical times, and his name went abroad as one of the best of college pitchers. Wherefore Timothy Doughton took much credit to himself.

Things looked quite rosy to Timothy these days. He had worked hard, and the goal was coming within seeing distance. The one thing he had really been afraid of seemed unlikely ever to happen now. Butt had kept silent about McCarthy, and his silence, having continued so long, would probably continue to the end. Because of it Timothy was disposed to

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forget any unpleasant feelings he had formerly cherished against his fellow-townsmen.

As the weeks went by, Butt became more and more satisfied that he had done the right thing in regard to McCarthy, and the chief thing that made him so was McCarthy himself. No one, not even Hawkins, had much to find fault with in Mac now. His old-time blustering ways had been toned down, and with all the idolizing that went with his baseball success, not even his worst enemy, if he had had one, could have accused him of being swelled-headed. Butt, however, who, perhaps, had a better chance of knowing than anyone else, saw other changes in him,—changes that convinced him that to have reported McCarthy to the Athletic Board would have been the most unjust thing he could have done. McCarthy would never take another cent for his ball playing so long as Tresham College expected him not to—Butt felt sure of that.

Then suddenly, almost on the eve of the Memorial Day game, Easton sent a formal protest against McCarthy's playing, on the ground that he was a professional. Memorial Day would fall on Friday, and the protest arrived Tuesday. The college was dumfounded. They had endured the disqualifying of Findlay with only a mild indignation. That had occurred before the season opened and before baseball enthusiasm had really got under way; besides,

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Findlay was a man who could be replaced, as the event proved. But now, in the full tide of the most successful season Tresham had known in years, to be deprived of their star man! The thought of the harm it would do far outweighed, for the moment, any consideration of whether Easton had any right to make the protest or not. They liked McCarthy—they approved of him thoroughly, both as a baseball player and as a man, and, right or wrong, they came out strong in his defense.

The news of Easton's action leaked out in the course of the day, and at practice that afternoon little groups of men collected all about the field, discussing it excitedly and vigorously. McCarthy himself had nothing to say—he neither denied nor affirmed; but there were plenty who took it upon themselves to speak for him.

Wednesday morning a mass meeting was held after chapel—brief but very much to the point. The whole college seemed to be carried away by a surge of indignation, and resolutions were hastily passed urging that McCarthy be retained on the team, even if it meant sanctioning professionalism, these resolutions to be presented to the Athletic Board when it met that night by a committee consisting of the presidents of the four classes.

The Athletic Board met in the Gym at half-past seven. There a calmer and more judicial spirit pre-

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vailed. The board, as represented that evening, was made up of the faculty, the managers of the track, baseball, and football teams, another senior—Dayton—and a junior. The meeting was a special one, called for the express purpose of taking action on Easton's protest. The committee representing the undergraduate body was admitted, because the board wished the students to feel that their wishes were being carefully regarded in a matter in which they felt themselves so vitally concerned.

The protest was read, and the matter laid open for discussion.

The president of the senior class immediately arose to present the resolutions voted upon that morning.

"You have heard the resolutions offered." The tone of the professor who was president of the board made the spokesman of the committee wish he had not been quite so headlong. "It seems to me that this matter had better receive a little calm investigation before we take action upon anything so—so impulsive as the document to which we have just listened. Is Mr. McCarthy himself present?"

McCarthy was not present, though the secretary had sent him a note requesting him to be.

"He will probably be here a little later," said the professor. "Of course, the simplest thing is to

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ask Mr. McCarthy himself whether there is any ground for this," and he indicated the letter of protest which he held in his hand. "Our Easton friends merely state that they are satisfied McCarthy has received financial recompense for playing ball—they offer no particulars and no proof. As I said, the person to set us right is Mr. McCarthy. But while we are waiting for him, perhaps we can discover what we ourselves know about it. Mr. Wilkins, it seems to me you should know something of Mr. McCarthy's—er—career before he entered Tresham?"

Wilkins was the manager of the baseball team.

"I'm afraid I don't know very much about him myself," he said. "I asked him about the matter this morning, and he just laughed and said not to worry. So far as I do know, he's all right, and the Easton manager had no more license to write that letter than—than he has to fly. Doughton, one of the men trying for assistant manager, was the one who got McCarthy to come to Tresham, and he came to me this afternoon to tell me what he knew. He said he'd be around outside so we could call him in if we wanted to. I think it would be a good idea to ask him to come in."

"Suppose we have Mr. Doughton summoned and listen to what he has to say," said the professor.

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Timothy was eagerly waiting outside and he appeared immediately.

"Mr. Wilkins tells us it was through your influence that Mr. McCarthy came here to college," the professor said to him. "Will you be so good as to tell us what you know about him, so far as it has any bearing on this letter?"

"McCarthy is no professional—I know that," Timothy replied confidently. "I heard of him last spring—heard he was a pretty good ball player, and early in the summer I looked him up and got him to come to Tresham."

"Did he play on his school team?"

"Yes."

"And on no other?"

"Not that I know of."

"What do you know about Mr. McCarthy's financial affairs? Has he, or has his family, plenty of money?"

"Why—no."

"Is he what you would call a poor boy? Would he need financial aid to enable him to go to college?"

"Yes."

"How was it possible, then, for him to come to college? Did you offer him any inducements in the way of money?"

"Why, I told him he could probably get a scholarship if he kept up in his studies all right."

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"But Mr. McCarthy is not receiving a scholarship from the college, although the grade of his work is quite high enough to entitle him to one."

"He didn't apply for one."

"Can you tell us, then, how he is able to meet the expenses of his being here?"

"No, except that he waits on table for his board."

"Then I understand that so far as you know, Mr. McCarthy has never, either before or since entering college, received recompense for his ball-playing that would be such as to justify anyone's calling him a professional?"

"He has not."

"Thank you, Mr. Doughton. I think that is all," and Timothy withdrew, quite satisfied that he had done what he could and done it effectively.

"Mr. Doughton seems fairly certain, and fairly emphatic," commented the professor. "Did you say he was one of the competitors for the assistant managership, Mr. Wilkins?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well—" The professor pondered for a moment. None of the others spoke, waiting for his initiative. "It seems to me Mr. McCarthy should be here by this time. Let me see—Mr. Chanler, you are a classmate of his. Are you well acquainted with Mr. McCarthy?"

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"Yes, sir." Butt sat up with a start. He had not expected to be questioned.

"Can you add anything to what Mr. Doughton has just said?"

Butt hesitated an instant. "I have only known McCarthy since fall. I do not think he has done anything that should put him off the team, and I know him pretty well."

"Does what you know coincide with what Mr. Doughton has told us?"

Again Butt hesitated. "Not entirely," he answered.

"What do you mean?"

"I would rather not say." The room was very still and Butt was conscious of a strained attention, almost a hostile attention, hanging upon every word he uttered.

"I am surprised, Mr. Chanler!" The professor's tone struck through the silence with icy coldness. "I should have said that it was the desire of every one of us to approach this matter openly with the earnest wish to get at the entire truth of it. If you have knowledge of any facts that would help to that end it is your duty to tell us."

Butt's face flamed red, but he bit his lip and did not answer.

"Do you imply that Mr. Doughton has not told us the truth?"

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"He has not told everything."

"Then you should tell us what he has omitted."

"I would rather not," and Butt's tone said very plainly that he would not.

The professor looked at him with a puzzled frown on his face, then it cleared with relief as a knock came at the door and McCarthy entered.

"Ah, Mr. McCarthy! You are just in time to put an end to some rather unpleasant beating about the bush. Perhaps we should have waited, anyway, until you came, for you are the person who can put us right in this matter once and for all."

McCarthy stood at the end of the long table around which they were seated, looking inscrutably at the professor who sat at the head. The white flare from the big arc light struck full on his face, making the freckles stand out with unnatural distinctness.

The professor hesitated. Something in McCarthy's look made him reluctant to put the question.

"It is best to get at the point at once," he said at length. "As you know, the manager of the Easton team has written us saying that they cannot have any further athletic relations with us if we allow you to play on our team Friday, and the reason they give is that you have laid yourself open to the charge of professionalism. Have you ever played ball for money?"

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It was an instant before McCarthy answered, but everyone in the room knew from his face what that answer would be. Wilkins leaned forward as if to bid him keep still. McCarthy's eyes were fixed overhead where an early moth was fluttering around the light.

"I have," he said.

"Will you tell us under what circumstances?"

"I was one of the pitchers on a team last summer, and I was paid for it just the same as the other fellows."

"What was the team?— No, that is not essential. I think that is all we need to know—er—and I want to say, Mr. McCarthy, that you have done the manly thing in not seeking to evade telling us. That is all, I think—no, just one moment! Did Mr. Doughton know this?"

McCarthy looked at him keenly, questioningly.

"He did," he said at length.

A stern, quick look of anger passed over the professor's face.

"Mr. Wilkins!" He spoke quickly and sharply.

"Mr. Doughton has deliberately lied to us. Whatever his standing in the competition, it is quite plain that he is not the kind of man we consider fit to manage our athletic teams. You will remove his name from the list at once." He glanced at his colleagues, and the other two professors silently nodded

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their approval. The undergraduates were too surprised to look more than their astonishment. "I think the rest of our deliberation concerns only the members of the board. The student resolutions will receive our careful attention, and I do not think you need to feel that your side will suffer from your not being present."

The four committeemen filed out of the room, followed by McCarthy. Timothy was waiting outside the door, eager to know what had happened. They were all embarrassed and reluctant to answer his questions. "Things aren't settled yet," they told him, and left him still waiting.

Butt and McCarthy turned into North College together. Neither spoke till they were upstairs in 32. McCarthy threw himself on the window seat.

"I suppose I did what you call the right thing," he said.

"I guess it would have turned out to be the only thing to do, anyway." Butt laid his hand on McCarthy's arm. "You've done the right thing straight from the beginning. I guess it's going to come out all right."

McCarthy did not answer.

When a crowd is possessed with one enthusiastic idea, it is strange how individual opinions are lost sight of. From the moment they learned of Easton's

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protest the student body of Tresham College was possessed with one overwhelming feeling—a burning indignation that anyone should consider McCarthy, their star pitcher, unfit to play on their team. Many of them, thinking it over coolly and soberly, would have seen that there might easily be something to say on the other side. But there was no cool and sober considering done. Abstract ideas of professionalism had no force with them whatever for the present. They all knew McCarthy—he was a man they had learned to respect and like—and everything else disappeared in the face of their personal approval of the man himself. The fact that dropping him from the team would deprive them of their best pitcher had a good deal of weight at first, but as the feeling grew the most potent element in arousing his fellow-students to his defense was the man's own popularity.

It is not known just what Wilkins told Timothy Doughton when he came out of the Gym and found him waiting after the board meeting. But it is only fair to suppose that Timothy honestly believed, from the account Wilkins gave him, that the whole trouble might have been averted if Butt had been more diplomatic and less stubborn in his foolish notions of right. If Butt had only supported his story, the matter might have been dropped right there and no more questions asked.

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Timothy passed a miserable night with his own thoughts. Not only had he lost all standing with the Athletic Board—and eventually that fact would leak out till everybody knew about it—it had all been to no purpose: he had lost also, for good and all, the hope of ever realizing the ambition that had become the ruling factor in his college life. It was near morning when he finally fell asleep, and when he awoke it was with a feeling of hard bitterness against the whole scheme of things, focused upon the one person whom he felt had figured deliberately in all his troubles from the very beginning—Robert Chanler.

Timothy was not a fellow to keep his bitterness to himself—he had to talk about it. At breakfast he told some one of the share he conceived Butt to have had in bringing the truth before the Athletic Board. He made no attempt to conceal the deception he himself had been ready to practice—as he looked upon it it was a justifiable deception, thoroughly sanctioned by precedent. Nor did he add anything to the plain facts of what Butt had done—the facts themselves were quite bad enough, constituting an act of treachery to the college that no man with the proper spirit would ever think of committing. He simply told the tale indignantly and bitterly, and told it to sympathetic ears.

But that was all that was necessary. Before noon

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he had his revenge quite as completely as if he had plotted it all out.

It is very natural to pick out some particular person to lay the blame on when people are greatly excited over what they think is a big wrong. On that Tuesday the excitement over McCarthy reached its highest. The students, by continually discussing it, had worked themselves into a tremendous turmoil. After the triumphant record of the season, to have their glorious nine go down in defeat to their greatest rival—Easton—and just for the lack of one man! A stranger overhearing any of them talking would have supposed that McCarthy was the greatest pitcher ever created and that without him the team would be utterly demoralized. They did not care whether McCarthy were right or wrong—if he were a professional it was up to those who knew to keep still for the sake of the team.

Such was the ruling spirit when on the way to chapel Timothy's tablemate told the tale he had heard from Timothy. The tale passed from one person to another, gathering ugly details as it went, until after chapel many hostile looks were sent in Butt's direction as he stood by his seat in the gallery, waiting for the upper classmen to pass out. All morning the story spread—he was a traitor to the college, actuated by all sorts of mean and selfish motives, and the feeling against him swiftly became

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very bitter. It did not matter that only the day before there had not been a more popular man in the freshman class.

"It's a shame Chanler couldn't have kept his mouth shut," one fellow observed regretfully. "It'll hurt him a lot more than it will McCarthy. I always thought he had pretty good spirit."

"He's a goody-goody!" was the bitter reply. "You never saw a goody-goody that wouldn't make a grand-stand play if he got a chance. It shows what his spirit is good for—willing to break up the team just to get a pull with the faculty!"

Butt did not notice anything at first. His mind was full of McCarthy and anxiety to know what the outcome for him would be; the Athletic Board had come to no decision the night before—they were to have another meeting that afternoon—which showed that there must be a good deal in his favor to make them hesitate so.

But going to his first recitation he could not possibly fail to see that something was wrong. A group of men were gathered near the door, talking, but at his approach they suddenly broke up. He spoke to one of them, who straightway turned his back and walked off without answering. It puzzled him. When the recitation was over he went up to Marston. Marston started to move away, but Butt overtook him and caught him by the arm.

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"What's the matter?" he asked.

Marston looked at him rather in surprise.

"What's the matter?" Butt repeated. "Everybody seems to be trying to dodge me. Weren't you trying to?"

"Yes, I was." Marston spoke with emphasis but he looked about uneasily.

"Why?"

"I don't like your kind."

"What are you talking about?" cried Butt in amazement.

"Are you a fool on top of everything else?" Marston asked coldly, and jerking his arm free he walked away.

Butt was too astonished to try to detain him further. He went up to his room. Hawkins was just coming out. He tried to pass without speaking but Butt stopped in front of him.

"Well?" Hawkins uttered the word as if he were demanding an explanation.

"I should say 'Well!' What's the matter with everybody?"

Hawkins looked down at him with a scowl. "I didn't expect it of you, Butt," he said gruffly. "I'd have gambled on your acting fair and I'm ashamed of you."

"Husky!"

"That's all right— I suppose you meant well

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and all that—but I think you cut things down a little bit too fine!”

Butt simply gazed up at him, too utterly confounded to speak. His look may have made Hawkins feel he had been too harsh. “I think you’ve been mighty foolish, Butt,” he said more gently. “You’ve hurt yourself a lot, and I’m sorry. I’ve got to go to math. now.”

Butt almost stumbled into the room. Durham was at his desk, but Butt did not speak to him. He hadn’t the courage to risk another rebuff. He went over and stood looking out the window.

“Butt!” Durham swung his chair around and faced him. “Tell me about it.”

Butt opened his mouth twice before he could speak. “I—I can’t! I don’t understand what’s the matter at all. Everybody acts as if I’d done something terrible—even Husky——”

“Tell me about the board meeting last night.”

“There’s nothing to tell—I don’t know what happened after we left. They asked Mac if he’d ever played ball for money and he said he had.”

“I knew it!” Durham brought his fist down on the desk with a crashing thump and his face fairly beamed.

“Knew what? For Heaven’s sake tell me what it’s all about!”

“Why, don’t you know? They think you told!”

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"I didn't!"

"I knew you didn't—I said you didn't. But folks have got the idea that McCarthy wouldn't have been found out if it hadn't been for you."

Butt looked at him in silence for a minute. "I wonder—" He turned to the window. "No, Mac would have told. Perhaps if I'd backed up Tim's story—but it would have come out sooner or later, it couldn't have helped it! Does everybody think I'm to blame?"

"Well, I haven't talked with everybody. There must be some people in college that have some sense left."

"Everybody's crazy!" Butt burst out with growing anger. "If they want to get sore at me for such an idiotic reason they can go to thunder! They're all fools and I don't care what such people think of me!"

"I shouldn't. But they'll get over it and be sorry."

"I don't care whether they do or not. There's just one thing I want to see done—I want Mac allowed to play ball. He deserves to be, if he wants to, and I'm going to that Athletic Board meeting this afternoon and tell them what I *do* know about him."

"Don't do anything you'll be sorry for, Butt."

"Oh, I'm not going to. The things I know

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will help him, if the board hasn't gone crazy, too. And then I'm going to quit this place for good and all."

"Oh, Butt, Butt! Don't be foolish!" Durham went over and took Butt by the shoulders. "You're acting like a kid."

Butt looked up at him with angry eyes. "Am I the only one that's acting like a kid? And there are supposed to be men in this college!"

Some one opened the door, and Butt darted into the bedroom. He did not care to see anyone at just that minute.

He sat through dinner that noon with head up and eyes shining. No one spoke to him. He was not hungry, but he would not let anyone think he was afraid to go to his meals. Afterwards he stayed in the library, with a book before him which he did not read, until time for the board meeting. Then he went up to the Gym.

"I wish to tell you what I know about McCarthy," he said steadily, when he had been admitted and they asked him what he wanted. "Now that he has told you what he has, I think you ought to know something he hasn't told you." He went on and gave them a full account of Timothy's methods in persuading McCarthy to come to Tresham, of Mr. Johnson's "scholarship," of how and why McCarthy had eventually refused Mr. Johnson's aid,

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and of how McCarthy had then set about earning his way through college by actual hard work.

"I thought you should know these things," Butt repeated again as he finished. "No one else knows them, fully, except McCarthy himself, and I don't think he ever would have told you. If they do not prove that he has the right kind of spirit, I don't know what the right kind of spirit is. Perhaps you think differently, but as I look at it there isn't a man in college fit to play on our team if McCarthy isn't. Thank you for listening to me."

He walked hastily out of the room. The men about the table were too startled by his vehemence to say anything before he was gone. Out on the steps he felt suddenly weak. He sat down, trembling and white. It had been a hard day and the last half-hour had been the biggest strain of all.

McCarthy was in his room waiting for him.

"It's a rotten shame!" he cried. "But I'll make it all right. I've told some of them what I think—but I'll fix the whole bunch!"

But Butt showed little interest. "What's the use?" he asked wearily. "They're nothing but a lot of sheep."

"That's right—and they've got a bum leader to-day. But they'll be different to-morrow—you wait."

McCarthy was waiting for Butt after supper,

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and together they walked around the campus and out back of the church. Neither had much to say. Butt was thinking that as soon as he heard what action the Athletic Board had finally decided upon he would begin packing up his things. He was bitter and sore and his mind was made up to leave college.

McCarthy's mind was full of something, too—Butt would have noticed it ordinarily—but he managed to refrain from talking about it. At length he looked at his watch and jumped to his feet.

"Come on," he said almost gayly.

"Where are you going?"

"To the mass meeting."

"I'm not going."

"Of course you are. You aren't afraid are you?"

Butt shut his lips together and got to his feet.

"I don't see the use of it," he said.

"They're going to settle my hash at this mass meeting to-night—or at least announce how it's already been settled, and I want you there to hear."

Everybody had turned out for the meeting and College Hall was packed full. The feeling against Butt had pretty well burned itself out—calmer consideration had convinced most of the men that it had been exaggerated and unfair. Butt's former reputation for being square and of the right stuff

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was reasserting itself and the majority were ashamed of having been so foolish earlier in the day. But some were unchanged, and they were the ones who did the loudest talking.

It was an unusual mass meeting, because there was none of the singing and cheering that always marks the opening of such gatherings. Everybody seemed expectant and watched the door as if awaiting some one.

So everybody saw Butt and McCarthy enter. A cheer went up—a cheer for McCarthy. As it died down some one yelled out "*Ya-ah! Chanler.*" An answering cry from across the hall arose, and a shout of "Put him up!" It was a hostile shout, not the kind that greets a favored one. Two or three cat-calls followed.

Butt and McCarthy had taken seats near the door. At the first "*Ya-ah*" Mac sprang to his feet, his face livid and fists clenched. Just then Wilkins came through the door. He was the one they had been waiting for and all attention was turned to him as he walked up the aisle.

Butt got up.

"Where are you going?" McCarthy cried.

"Out—" he fairly gulped out the word.

"Wait!" urged McCarthy, catching him by the arm. Butt jerked himself free and slipped through the open door.

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Wilkins was on the platform now. A tense silence hung over the room as he opened his lips to speak.

"The Athletic Board has come to a decision regarding the protest Easton has sent us," he began. "It has decided that McCarthy shall continue to play——"

"*A-ay!*" A storm of applause and cheers interrupted him. It lasted a full minute, while the hallful of men stood up and turned till they faced McCarthy. He kept his seat, his lips set in a hard line. The expression on his face was a puzzle. He seemed deaf to the ovation he was receiving.

At length it was quiet enough for Wilkins to continue.

"McCarthy can go on playing on our team, and if there's any college that doesn't like it they needn't play with us. But the board makes one recommendation, which I think is a wise one. It is more than likely that Easton sent that protest because they were afraid. They think perhaps they can beat us if McCarthy doesn't play. The board recommends that we put Phillips in the box to-morrow, and show 'em we can beat 'em anyway. Then they'll see that our keeping McCarthy is a matter of principle with us—and it is that—and not because we're afraid we can't win victories without him. The board merely makes this as a suggestion and leaves it for the team

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to decide. I would like to know what the pleasure of the student body is."

A motion was made and passed by thunderous acclamation that the board's suggestion be followed. Then, rising to leave, they stopped to give another cheer for McCarthy.

McCarthy hurried up the aisle and sprang to the platform.

"Wait a minute!" he shouted, holding up one hand. "I want to say something."

Those who were started for the door turned back. McCarthy waited till everybody was seated again.

"If all this had happened last night, I guess I'd have had to buy me a new hat, my head would have grown so." A ripple of laughter went through the crowd, but McCarthy's face was deadly serious. "But to-night I'm not troubled that way. You've done something to-day that makes me wonder if you're not just a lot of fools." The laughter was all gone now. Everybody sat up in astonishment. "I know some of you are muckers—you proved it a few minutes ago when you yelled at Butt Chanler the way you did. Any of you are fools if you believed that fellow has ever done anything you think nobody but a traitor to the college would do. There isn't a squarer man in this college than Butt Chanler, or one that's a better friend of mine. He didn't tell the

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Athletic Board I played on the Island team. The man who started the story that he did is a liar. I told them myself, because I knew it was no game to lie. I'd have been found out some time, anyway, and then it would have been worse than ever.

"If you want to know the kind of spirit Chanler's got, I'll tell you something. I haven't had a cent of money from this college since I came here except what I've earned—scholarship or anything else. And I needed it. Butt Chanler put up two hundred dollars for me last winter. I'm going to pay it back, but he had no surety for that. He didn't do it because he liked me—I don't think he did, then—he did it because I could play baseball and he wanted me to stay here and be on the team. That's the kind of Tresham spirit he's got. A lot of you hooted at him to-night—if there's one of you that has any license to trot in his class you've got to show me. I hope I've made you ashamed of yourselves."

He ended with a grin—that winning, crooked grin of his—and it somehow took all the sting from what he had been saying. But many were ashamed. The pendulum had swung back—if Butt had been there he would have received an ovation beside which the one they had given McCarthy would have been a mere patter.

And Butt did not know.

CHAPTER XV

"FIRST IN THE HEARTS—"

BUTT slipped out of College Hall utterly broken in spirit. All day his pride had held him up, but those cruel yells had pierced even through his pride. He had never imagined anything could hurt so much.

He started walking. He did not know where he was going, nor care. He walked for hours, far out into the hills, until he was so exhausted he could walk no farther. Then he sat down beside the road. His eyes closed immediately, and he slept till the rising sun struck upon his face and wakened him.

He got up, faint with hunger, and looked about him. Farther up the road was a farmhouse. The inmates were already up, the farmer's wife getting breakfast. Butt got some food and found out where he was. It was sixteen miles from Tresham.

He was lame from his long walk. He felt as though he had been tramping through an interminable nightmare. The events of yesterday seemed like an ugly dream. He almost wondered if it weren't a dream after all—if he had really gone into College

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Hall the evening before and been hissed by the fellows there. He shook himself together with a nervous laugh. He would find out it was real enough when he got back. For he must go back.

"How can I get back to Tresham?" he asked the farmer.

It appeared there was no way except to walk several miles first. But the farmer was going to Southboro for a Decoration Day outing later in the morning—Butt could ride along with the rest of the family. Butt had forgotten it was Decoration Day.

It was two o'clock when Butt finally got a car at Southboro. He got off just outside the village of Tresham and went up to the Dorms by the back way over the hill. He wanted to avoid as many people as he could.

McCarthy was in 32 North, alone, waiting.

"I knew you'd show up if I waited long enough," he said blithely. "Where've you been?"

"Exploring the country," Butt responded dully.

"You look it! Come, wash up and get a clean collar on. We want to see some of that game."

"Go on if you want to. I'm not going."

"Sure, you are! Get a move on!"

"I've got something else to do."

"What, I'd like to know?"

"Pack. I'm going home."

McCarthy took him by the shoulders and shook

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him. "Butt, if you're nothing else, you certainly are a fool at times! Didn't I tell you I'd fix it up? And I have. Come on! Don't you want to see the game?"

Butt shook off McCarthy's hands. "So, they wouldn't let you play after all?" he asked bitterly. "I made a mess of it even with the Athletic Board!"

"You did? Listen here—I'm an honored and respected member of the Tresham baseball team still, but they're using Phillips to-day to show Easton they aren't afraid of not using me."

Butt's face lightened. "Is it all right—really?"

"Of course it is. And it's all right with you, too. I bet there isn't a more popular man in Tresham College to-day than you are—unless it's me."

"Don't joke, Mac! I don't feel like it."

"I wasn't joking, except that last about myself. I guess that wasn't so very funny, at that. Honestly, they've come to their senses. They would have, anyway, but I hurried 'em up."

"What do you mean?"

So McCarthy told him about the mass meeting. "I tell you, they're ashamed of themselves. They've been coming around here all day to tell you so. There'd be a bunch here now if I hadn't promised I'd bring you down the minute you showed up."

"*That's* what you've been waiting for?" Butt

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laughed happily—an immense load seemed suddenly lifted from his spirits. “That settles it, then. I wouldn’t go now, anyway.”

“Butt! Don’t be an idiot!”

Butt was firm, however. He could not have been dragged to the field.

“You’re a selfish pig, that’s all I can say for you,” protested McCarthy. “Don’t you suppose I want to see that game?”

“Go ahead—I don’t want you here with me.”

“I won’t do it! Think I’m going to let you go traipsing off again? Not much!—Hear that!” The sound of the long Tresham cheer came through the window, wafted up from the field. “Doesn’t that make you want to be there?”

“Yes. But I’m not going.”

“You’re afraid—and you weren’t last night! Well—” McCarthy stopped, rather at a loss to understand it. Then came the sound of another cheer from the field. “Say—I’ve got to see what’s doing! I know—Chapel Tower! We can see from there, and you needn’t be scared anybody ’ll see you. Come on!”

So they climbed to the top of Chapel Tower. The field lay spread out far below them, the players mere dots moving about on the ground. They could distinguish one team from the other only by the cheering, which came to their ears plainly when the

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wind blew right. Tresham always cheered for each man when he went up to bat and the long cheer for the team when the team was in the field.

"This is cheating the management," grinned McCarthy, straddling the railing that topped the tower.

"I've got a season ticket, so I'm not cheating 'em. Golly! Look at that! It's a three-bagger, sure!"

"Listen!" McCarthy curved his hand behind his ear. "They're cheering for him—can you make it out?"

"It's Ford. It's a three-bagger! Two men came in then. 'Wonder what the score is?"

And so they watched the game. It was a Tresham day. For all their protest Easton was not having a show. At the end the Tresham rooters stood up in the bleachers and yelled the score: "*One—two—*" up to nine, and then a long, lugubrious "*One!*"

"Nine to one! I guess that's going a little." McCarthy jumped down from his perch with a joyful hop.

"And I guess you aren't the only pitcher there is."

"Never said I was. Phil's a good man, and he's going to be better."

They groped their way down the dark stairs and

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came out on the campus again. Puffing and panting, they saw Durham hurrying up the hill. He had come away at the end of the game without waiting for the cheering.

"Hey!" McCarthy yelled at him. "I've got him!"

Durham waddled up all out of breath. "Hold—on—to—him!" he gasped. He stopped in front of Butt, red and smiling.

"Hello!" Butt said.

"I should say Hello! Do you know I lost seventeen pounds worrying about you last night? You come with me. I'm not going to let you out of my sight again, and I want a clean collar. Just look at this!"

Between them his enthusiasm and the sun had made a sorry sight of Durham's collar. They went up to the room to make the change, during the course of which Durham summarized the game.

"And that man Ford is a corker! He had his eye and his wing and his head right with him to-day. Did you see that three-bagger of his? It ought to have been a home run, but their left fielder woke up just in time to spoil it."

"S-sh! Some one's coming—you'd better hide, Butt!" McCarthy jeered laughingly. They could hear the sound of singing, coming nearer and nearer. "That's them! They don't know you're here."

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The singers trooped up the stairs and stopped outside the door.

"Can you make a cherry pie, Bully boy, Bully boy?
Can you make a cherry pie, charming Bully?"

Durham threw open the door.

"Will you cut it out?" he roared. "You ought to be locked——"

But they drowned him out with their vigorous:

"He's a young thing and cannot leave his mother!"

Then they filed in—Grey, Sloane, Hall, Randall, Hawkins—a full dozen of them. Butt was standing by his desk, and when they saw him they made a rush for him. It was several minutes before he emerged from the hubbub. Hawkins had been hanging back. Butt looked at him questioningly. Then Hawkins slouched forward.

"I'm ashamed of myself—I was dead wrong. I don't deserve to call myself a friend or a fraternity-brother or any——"

"Cut it, Husky!" Butt reached out both his hands and Hawkins gripped them in his big ones. "You need a lickin'."

Hawkins burst into a huge guffaw of sheer joy.

"Right-o, Kiddo! Want the job?" He bent down and with a swing landed Butt on his shoulder.

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“You dine in Southboro to-night, Sonny—you and Mac—and it’s on us. Are you on?”

They were “on”—and straightway they trooped down to the car. A prim little old lady near the front was so shocked at the noise they made that she turned completely around to look at them. And prim as she was, she had to smile at a little fellow with a very happy face, almost crowded out of sight by the two hulking giants on each side of him, who was looking straight in her direction and beating time to the song they sang:

“We’re coming, we’re coming,
Our brave little band——”

(1)

THE END

